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UNKNOWN LONDON

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

FLEET STREET
IN SEVEN CENTURIES

London News Agency

THE HEAD OF THE DUKE OF SUFFOLK

In St. Botolph Church, Aldgate

UNKNOWN LONDON

BY WALTER GEORGE BELL

F.R.A.S. WITH SEVENTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS

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PREFACE

HEREIN you will find much concerning those things which everybody knows about, but nobody knows—the things you have known about since childhood, and have been content to leave them at that, knowing little of what they are and still less where they are to be found. I have dealt mostly with the big things that London has in its keeping, such as the Domesday Book (can you tell me off-hand where it is to be seen?); with the Confessor's Shrine (of the crowds who enter Westminster Abbey there is a big leaven who do not even know that it is there); with the massive fragments of London's Roman Wall that still survive; with that spot in Smithfield where martyrs burnt and English history was made; with the Duke of Suffolk's head and its dramatic story; with our Roman baths; with London Stone and odd others—things familiar as household words and as much apart from the average Londoner's life as are the Pyramids of Egypt. Incidentally, London has the bones of one of

those Pyramid builders. I have not gone outside the City save twice to our famous Abbey and once to Wapping, for a breath from the salt sea, a few minutes walk below Tower Bridge. You can cover all the ground on foot on two or three afternoons. I should lay claim to be a successful showman, for there is no charge; everything to which this book may guide you is free.

The City of London—the innermost "square mile"—is the richest ground for historical associations in all our world Empire, and the greater pity, therefore, that it should be unknown. The lowest depth of ignorance of the City's historical places, of surviving remains of its great past, of London history that is weaved close into the web of the nation's story—the real bottom of the abyss—you plumb in the average City man. He knows nothing. He is a mere child; until you do as I have done, take him on an adventurous voyage of exploration, and open his eyes to all those things that he has never seen, and tell him what he has never taken the trouble to know. It is much the same with the visitor from the Empire's broad Dominions. You conduct him to the Parks and the Royal Palace, Regent Street and theatre-land in the West End, introduce him to Thames beauties at Richmond; but he knows

the City only as a place that he has been rushed through to see The Tower of London, the Bank of England being pointed out on the way.

The City is the kernel of London, the sole depository of its history for centuries, when, in fact, it was London, the rest being fields. Foot for foot, it offers more of interest to the man or woman of British race than any other equal area in the world.

Much will be missed from these pages. I have gone to work lazily, omitting most things—give me credit for candour—picking here and there. A solitary church has mention; not a single Livery Company's hall, not Guildhall nor Gog and Magog, not that gorgeous example of Norman builders' craft, St Bartholomew the Great, not St Paul's, not—but the City affords material that might fill a shelf with volumes like this. Some things are still sealed; and there I pick a quarrel with the City Companies. Why are their historic halls hermetically closed, and so are quite unknown to Londoners? The churches are open for two or three hours daily, and why not they? The Tower of London now gives admission to its dungeons—which are no dungeons, but are above ground—and to the Bloody Tower, but a prohibition, the good sense of which I have never understood, forbids visitors from entering

the sad little church of St Peter ad Vincula, save after a most troublesome and roundabout process of getting written leave.

I owe much to the kindness of friends in assisting me with illustrations. Canon Westlake sent me the photograph of the sandbagged Shrine of the Confessor; Mr Henry Froude has permitted the reproduction of the Shrine itself, and also of King Charles II. in wax effigy, from Mr Bond's *Westminster Abbey*. To a like courtesy from the Clarendon Press, Oxford, I am indebted for the block of London Stone from the late Sir Laurence Gomme's *The Making of London*; to *Knowledge* for the illustration of the Bones of Men-kau-Ra on their tray; and to the Trustees of the British Museum for that of the coffin-lid of that Pharaoh. The Public Record Office, always so helpful, granted permission for a photograph to be taken of the Domesday Book; and the Rev. J. F. Marr, Vicar of Aldgate, allowed me to photograph that grim *memento mori* which forms my frontispiece.

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UNKNOWN LONDON

I

THE HEAD OF THE DUKE OF SUFFOLK

YEARS ago, when Time sped past me with less haste than he makes to-day, a curious search took me across the City into Portsoken Ward. The name sounds unfamiliar since we have ceased to identify the City by its wards, but you know the area well, lying up against The Tower. It has the Minories as its chief highway, along which the heavy drays laden at the river wharves rumble on to Tower Bridge. I turned into America Square to call at an unpretentious house, obviously once some small merchant's residence. London changes rapidly with the march of improvement, but on renewing acquaintance with America Square only the other day it was pleasant to find the house still standing. Still, too, it bears indications that a school for little boys is carried on there, for even where commerce presses most closely about the waterside there are children dwelling and wanting education.

My ring brought to the door a man of middle

age, sombrely dressed in black. Nature by some subtle power stamps the mark of each profession upon those who follow it. Mix in any large gathering of doctors, of actors, lawyers, artists or merchants, and there can be no mistaking the calling these men represent. Here was no possibility of error. Perhaps it is the constant habit of speaking in subdued tones to visitors looking over the church, and deferential association with the clergy, that give unmistakable personality to the verger.

"I want," I said, "the head of the Duke of Suffolk."

It was not an ordinary request for one complete stranger to make of another, calling casually at his house. A maniac might have delivered such a message. The recipient betrayed no token of surprise. He would get the keys, he said. We walked together to the Church of the Holy Trinity, Minories, and crossing amidst the traffic I turned towards Tower Hill to seek a glimpse among the trees of what is assuredly the most tragic spot in all England—those few square yards of blood-soaked ground upon which the scaffold and the block stood. On the scaffold raised there Suffolk met his death, and many victims of the devious ways and ends of statecraft, the guilty and the guiltless, before and since his time. Tall ware-

houses obstructed my view. Holy Trinity is but a few paces distant from America Square, but perhaps is not easy to find without a guide. It is a plain, drab structure, with stucco laid upon its west front, and nothing to bespeak antiquity, though still its northern wall contains the ancient masonry of the buildings of the nuns of St Olave, whose chapel this was. The church had then the high old-fashioned pews. My companion unlocked a little cupboard, and produced the relic which this City church for so many centuries had sheltered. It was boxed (that seems the most appropriate word) in glass —the head of Henry Grey, Duke of Suffolk.

The marks on the neck were pointed out. There the headsman had failed, but this other blow was true. The verger, keenly interested, lost his air of professional sadness, and his face lighted with animation as he talked of this treasured if grim *memento mori* left in his keeping; of the man—soldier, statesman, plotter—whose active brain had dwelt within this mummified skull. In 1554 Suffolk perished on Tower Hill, a conspirator against the Throne. A murmur as the axe fell passed through the crowd swaying and rocking about the scaffold, that involuntary protest of horror that comes from all men, even the most debased, at the taking

of human life; the sound must have travelled on the cold still air of that February morning here to the quietude about the church. The headsman, lifting the bleeding relic by its matted hair, exhibited it at the four corners of the platform with the accustomed ceremonial—"This is the head of a traitor!" Little might we regret Suffolk's end had it not been that his ambition brought to a like fate one who occupies a far nobler place in England's history, his daughter, the unfortunate Lady Jane Grey. One thinks first of her, looking into this face of her father. The long forehead, the fine nose, the mouth in which some have yet seen lingering the curve of the last agony, have survived the changes after death.

Holy Trinity stands within the ancient liberties of The Tower. The convent of nuns of the Order of St Olave, bearing the name of their foundress, Santa Clara of Assisi, spread wide about this site, over ground now covered with commercial buildings. There was many another religious house in mediæval London where to-day are only City streets and commerce. These were the "Sorores Minores," and from them the district is still known as the Minories. The nuns' house did not survive the suppression of the monasteries. It was granted by King Edward VI. to Suffolk,

then climbing to those heights from which he suffered so grievous a fall, and there he made his town residence. The church was largely rebuilt in the opening years of the eighteenth century. History is silent, but one may imagine it to have been a pious service of Suffolk's widow —herself a daughter of Charles Brandon and that Mary Tudor who was the younger sister of King Henry VIII.—to save this loved head from exposure on the pikes above London Bridge, and bring it for final rest in the chapel where both had worshipped. Suffolk's body is believed to lie in an unknown grave in that sad little church of St Peter ad Vincula, within The Tower.

It was in the year 1851 that the head was found in a small vault on the south side of the altar of Holy Trinity, bearing a thick incrustation of oak sawdust, such as might have half-filled the basket upon the scaffold. Tannin from oak is a well-known preservative, and to its agency the safe-keeping of this relic through so many years is held to be due.

Suffolk was the most nerveless man who ever aspired by deep conspiracy to place his child upon a throne. Impotent to take great decisions, and thereby stand or fall, he attached himself to Seymour and Northumberland in turn during the troubled years when a weak boy, King

Edward VI. filled the seat of the most dreaded of Tudor male sovereigns. When the plot to deprive Queen Mary of her inheritance ripened he was one of the company who, three days after Edward's death, went to Sion House, Isleworth, to proclaim the Lady Jane Queen. The crowded narrative of her brief reign should be too familiar to need recapitulation. It was Suffolk, when the citizens of London had declared for Mary, and the plotters were beaten, who himself despoiled his daughter of the emblems of Royalty with which she had burdened herself so unwillingly; Suffolk who sought his own life, when all else was lost, by himself proclaiming Mary the Queen from The Tower gates. He was arrested and taken back to The Tower a prisoner. Mary, perhaps contemptuously, set him free, for those of her blood had little tolerance for a coward, giving him liberty to live on his property at East Sheen. The intercession of Suffolk's Duchess, who was the Queen's godmother and enjoyed her intimate friendship, is believed to have secured for him this last favour.

The projected marriage with Philip of Spain a few months later set the country aflame, and Kent and Essex rose under Sir Thomas Wyatt. Suffolk had learnt nothing: neither to know the limitations of his own weak, irresolute character

nor to gauge the true feelings of the English people, torn between fear of losing the work of the Reformation on the one hand, and the return of internal anarchy on the other should the new revolution succeed. He was booted and spurred when a messenger came from the Queen summoning him to appear at Court; she desired, it has been said, to give him the opportunity to "make good" by accepting a command against the rebels. He rode away from his house at Sheen—but not to Whitehall.

Suffolk is next heard of in Leicestershire and Warwickshire, where his extensive estates lay. There he attempted to stir up rebellion among the yeomen, but signally failed. Coventry closed its gates against him and his followers. The Duke was soon a fugitive, and taking disguise in a serving man's clothes sought to hide himself in dense forests. The treachery of his own servant betrayed him for reward. He was seized when concealed in the trunk of a hollow tree at Astley Cooper, in Warwickshire, and with three hundred horsemen escorting him was brought to London and committed to The Tower.

Father and daughter were together State prisoners in different apartments of that grim fortress. They never met. Five days after the execution of Lady Jane Grey on Tower Green,

Suffolk was led out to his trial for high treason in Westminster Hall, "who at his going out," says an old chronicler, "went very stoutly and cheerfully enough, but at his returning he landed at the water gate with a countenance very heavy and pensive, desiring all men to pray for him." Knowledge of his responsibility for his daughter's untimely death must have added to the bitterness of that day. We have a letter of Queen Jane's written to her father shortly before her execution; the old spelling is best preserved:

"To the Duke of Suffolk.

"The Lord comforte your Grace, and that in his worde, whearin all creatures onlye are to be comforted. And thoughe it hathe pleased God to take away ij of your children, yet thincke not, I most humblye beseach your Grace, that you have loste them, but truste that we, by leavinge this mortall life, have wunne an immortal life. And I for my parte, as I have honoured your grace in this life, wyll praye for you in another life.

"Your Gracys humble daughter,

"JANE DUDDELEY."

If atonement were possible, then Suffolk's bearing on the scaffold should do much. In his last hour he played the man. The little procession came upon Tower Hill on Friday, the 20th February 1554, at nine of the clock.

"Masters," he said to the people, "I have offended against the Queen and her laws, and

thereby I am justly condemned to die, and am willing to die, desiring all men to be obedient; and I pray God that this my death may be an example to all men, beseeching you all to bear me witness that I die in the faith of Christ, trusting to be saved by His blood only, and by no other trumpery, the which died for me, and for all men that truly repent and steadfastly trust in Him. And I do repent, desiring you all to pray God for me, that when you see my head depart from me, you will pray to God that He will receive my soul."

Then occurred one of those farcical incidents inseparable at times from moments of the deepest tragedy.

A man standing in the forefront of the crowd called out, "My lord, how shall I do for the money that you do owe me?"

Suffolk answered, "Alas, good fellow, I pray thee trouble me not now, but go thy way to my officers." He knit a handkerchief about his eyes, laid his head upon the block, and with arms outstretched as a signal and the words on his lips, "Into Thy hands, O Lord," passed into eternity. They were the words used by Lady Jane Grey when the axe fell.

How little men are, that six small squares of glass can enclose so much!

History, weighted by its great task, has dealt severely with the Duke of Suffolk, but in the presence of this frail relic of mortality let me recall words told to his good. It is glorious old Holinshed who speaks. "A man of high nobility by birth: and of nature to his friends gentle and courteous: more easy indeed to be led than was thought expedient: of stomach stout and hard: hasty and soon kindled, but pacified straight again, and sorry if in his heat ought had passed him otherwise than reason might seem to bear: upright and plain in his private dealings: no dissembler, nor well able to bear injuries: but yet forgiving and forgetting the same, if the party would seem but to acknowledge his fault, and to seek reconcilement: bountiful he was and very liberal; somewhat learned himself, and a great favourer of those who were learned. So that to many he showed himself a very Mæcenas. As free from covetousness as void of pride and disdainful haughtiness of mind: more regarding plain meaning men than claw-back flatterers. And this virtue he had, that he could patiently hear his faults told him by those whom he had in credit for their wisdom and faithful meaning towards him. He was an hearty friend unto the Gospel."

Sir George Scharf, a former Keeper of the

National Portrait Gallery, examined this head carefully, and writing of it said: "The arched form of the eyebrows, and the aquiline shape of the nose correspond with the portrait engraved in Lodge's series from a picture in possession of the Marquis of Salisbury at Hatfield, a duplicate of which is in the National Portrait Gallery." Lord Ronald Sutherland-Gower has said of Scharf that no better judge of an historical head, whether on canvas or in a mummified state, ever existed. The medical report upon the relic by Dr F. J. Mouat, a Local Government Board Inspector, also supports its authenticity:

"The anatomical characters of the exposed bones show that the head belonged to a man past the prime of life. The narrow retreating forehead, flattened sides and roof of the skull, and disproportionate development of the occipital region indicate moderate mental powers and strong animal faculties. The whole conformation, if there be any truth in external cranial indications of mental and moral manifestations, tends to prove indecision of character, considerable self-esteem, and very moderate reasoning powers.

"That the head was removed by rapid decapitation during life admits of no doubt. A large gaping gash, which had not divided the sub-

cutaneous structures, shows that the first stroke of the axe was misdirected, too near the occiput, and in a slanting direction. The second blow, a little lower down, separated the head from the trunk below the fourth and fifth cervical vertebrae. The retraction of the skin, the violent convulsive action of the muscles, and the formation of a cup-like cavity with the body of the spinal bone at the base, prove that the severance was effected during life, and in cold weather. The ears are small, well formed, and closely adhering to the head; the aperture being remarkably large, and the lobe clearly defined. The eyeballs must have been full, and a little prominent during life: all the hairs from the head, brows, lips and chin have fallen out: the cheek bones are somewhat high and the chin retreating."

Suffolk's portrait by Johannes Corvus in the national collections at Trafalgar Square shows the Duke in lace ruffle and jewelled flat cap and slashed doublet and hose. I again saw this head but the other day, and with the painted portrait fresh in memory I must say that the one did strongly recall the other.

. . . . . .

There the story might well have stopped, where it rested till recently. It is less pleasant to write the epilogue. Holy Trinity still stands, set back

against the yards and warehouses of the London and North Western Railway, the scene of a furious fire that lighted the whole City one dark night a few years ago. It has drifted out of the life of the Minories. The church was closed in 1899, and thereupon dismantled. The fine Pelham monument, with kneeling figures of that stout Elizabethan knight, Sir John Pelham, and his young son, who died near together in date, leaving a widow and mother, herself daughter of a Lord St John of Bletsoe, to mourn their loss—

" Death First did strike Sir John Here Tomb'd in claye
And then Enforst His Sonne to Followe Faste
Of Pelham's Line this Knyghte Was Chiefe and Staye
By this Beholde all Fleshe Must Dye at Last
Best Bletsowes Lord thy Sister Most may Moane
Both Mate and Sonn Hathe Left Her Here Alone "

as the inscription tells—that has gone to Stanmer, in Sussex. The pulpit went elsewhere; but the building still does some social service, as a mission room and centre of philanthropic activity in this busy part of the east-lying City. The Duke of Suffolk's head found a new resting-place at St Botolph's, Aldgate, to which the parish has been annexed, and there it is to-day, in the Vicar's cupboard. The Vicar naturally does not encourage mere morbid curiosity in visitors to his

church, but has placed no difficulty in the way of those of historical bent of mind who come, anxious to see the relic. My present concern is sorely with a beadle and sexton, who held office at Holy Trinity so long ago as 1786. Incidentally, to eke out his small fees, he sold coals. So ribalds called him "Mr Smallcole."

It is a most horrible business. A neighbour chanced to peep into the beadle's house, and to his utter astonishment disturbed him when in the act of dividing into lengths with a saw what were obviously portions of coffins. He alarmed the churchwarden. Fearing the worst, that official ordered the beadle to give up his keys. The bell was rung backwards, a signal in old days of fire in the parish. Such parishioners as answered the summons were told its true meaning; they formed therewith a parish meeting in the aisle of the church; then together, with candles borne ahead, descended into the choked vaults of Holy Trinity. The candles burnt dimly in the close air, unwholesome with the contagion of centuries. Coffins lay about, violently torn open, sawn, chopped—and worse! "It had nearer resemblance to a slaughterhouse than a vault for the interment of our deceased friends," said one investigator. The beadle and sexton had made a business of supplying himself

with wood from this source, and some neighbours, too, who were participants with him, if not actual instigators of the crime.

The parish, "to the disgrace of all society," as one wrote, was content to order the beadle to ask pardon, and on his willing undertaking not to be guilty of the like offence again he appears to have been allowed to continue his office. But the scandal got out, as always foul scandal will. Some leaflets of the day, giving expression to just indignation, though through a vein of forced satire and unpleasant ribaldry, the subject being what it was, came into possession of the Rev. E. M. Tomlinson, a former vicar of Holy Trinity and the historian of the Minories, who has printed them.

In the light of such facts as these, who shall now decide? Lady Jane Grey has left an imperishable memory. Many were the sufferers in that fearful time of butchery who command our sympathy, but none has so wholly won our hearts as this young Queen of a nine days' reign, and so pitiful an end. The tragedy of Suffolk is grim enough without these port-mortem wanderings of his head. If sawdust has preserved this relic of frail humanity, as seems likely, was it the dust of "Mr Smallcole's" unholy sawing? Is this one of his mutilations?—not Suffolk at

all. Contemporary annalists have written of the Duke suffering death at one blow of the axe. Here, on the neck, the marks are distinct of two.

'Yet the head and the painted portraits are strangely like.

II

REMAINS OF THE CITY WALL

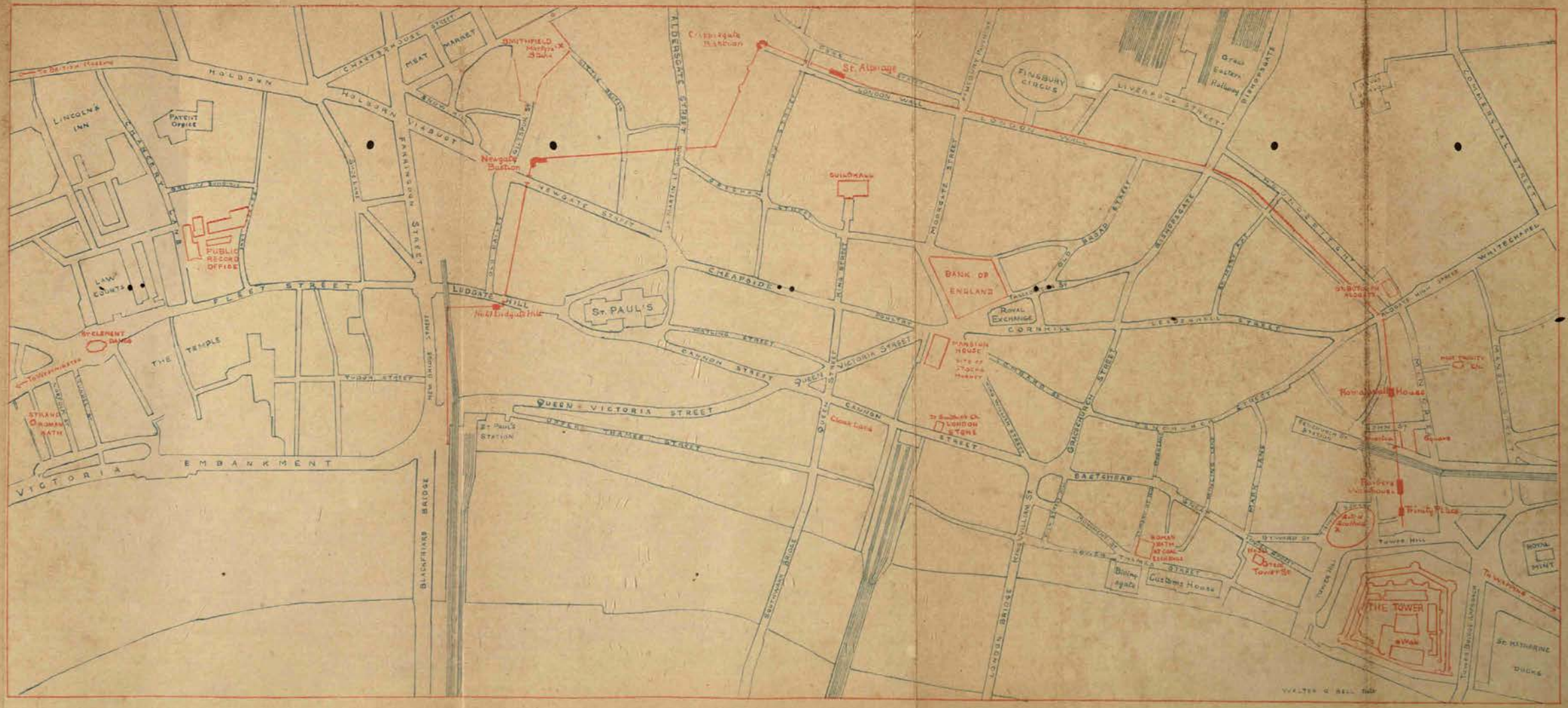
IF I say that there is a length of 120 feet of the old City Wall of London still upright, much of it Roman work, rising to a height of no less than 35 feet—the height of the third floor of a City house—I expect to be accused of romancing. And, moreover, complete from foundations upwards, even to the sentinel's walk on the top and the protecting bulwark. Impossible? Well, there it is. You could parade a company of troops in the shadow. It is one of the many things that the City manages to conceal; a hefty big possession this, to be tucked away completely out of sight.

Nobody knows of it, none of the half million people who pass in and out of the City every day has ever seen it, or even heard of its existence—none save some archæologists. That is because this surprising fragment is in private ownership, and except to the few who may receive permission to pay it a visit nothing of it is visible. Stay, you get a sight of this wall, with the sunlight

upon it, as I have done, from a City parson's back windows in a certain street, if you know which one of the City's houses to choose for the purpose.

It is not easy to visualize London as a city walled round with such a wall as this, so stout and tall, as Chester is still, and less perfectly York, though it should be in mind every day. The 'buses pour through the City to Ludgate, Newgate, Cripplegate, Moorgate, Aldgate and the rest, and a City gate means a gate in a wall, and can mean nothing else. It is not an opening in the air. London Wall preserves the name, given to a street in the City's northern area where the wall had stood. But although so much exists to revive our remembrance, I doubt if ever London's wall appears to the average Londoner as a real, substantial thing.

These gates whose names are so familiar were real, and substantial too, with guarding turrets, pierced for defence, with battlements above, and heavy iron portcullis to fall, and locks and bars and chains to secure the passage against forced assault. All such provision would have been mere waste if the wall itself were not as strong as were the gates. Like a chain, the strength of a mural fortification is to be found in its weakest link. This wall was strong, for it was the capital's



MAP OF THE CITY OF LONDON

LINE OF THE ANCIENT CITY WALL AND SURVIVING FRAGMENTS MARKED THUS ——■——

Places named in Lists look in Red. Main Streets shown in Blue

main defence for many centuries, and its upkeep was a vital matter with the mediæval Mayor and citizens.

Nothing survives to-day of a single one of the gates. The Corporation takes no concern in marking sites, and only at Bishopsgate is there a tablet telling where one has stood.

It is otherwise with the wall itself, for there are very substantial remains of it, if only you know where to look for them. Apart from one considerable length exposed in the shallow and disused churchyard of St Alphage London Wall, nothing is to be seen from any of the main thoroughfares. Out of sight being out of mind, the City Wall is forgotten. I once brought up a citizen square against a large piece of it, towering above him. He looked upon me as a conjurer, never having realized that London was actually a walled town, or that the familiar gate names required the existence of a wall.

The great piece with which I sought to excite curiosity in my opening sentences stands very near The Tower of London. It is built into Barbers' Bonded Warehouses, which you enter from Cooper's Row, Trinity Square—or more truthfully I might say this part of the wide-spreading vaults and floors is added to the old City Wall. Long ago, when Barbers' premises

were about to rise under scaffolding, the builder found the City Wall there standing, and I picture him gazing at it, lost in thought, in puzzling wonder what he should do. To have it down with pickaxe and shovel would be a herculean and costly task. It is immensely thick, and hard as iron. How long ago that was I cannot tell, but the partner of Messrs Joseph Barber & Co. who showed me round the wall, with lamp held at the end of a lath and lighted that I might explore its intricacies, mentioned to me his great-grandfather as having been a member of the firm owning these vaults. All wine importers that I know in the City boast a hoary antiquity, and the partners live long. Sometimes I wonder if ever a new agent of Bacchus sets up the vine-leaves in London City nowadays.

Why waste a good wall? The question had only to be asked to be answered; and with a few shallow windows added at the bulwark level and a course or two of brick, the warehouse roof was sprung from the top. So the structure continues to do good service, as it had done sixteen or more centuries ago, and to the builder's happy inspiration (with the added savour of economy) is owing the preservation of the most complete fragment of the City Wall to-day, and one may hope for all time, now that the Corporation are

beginning to realize the value of the City's historical antiquities.

I passed in by an arch cut through the wall, here eight feet thick, and ascending a steep stairway at a corner turned to obtain a view where a bright electric lamp illuminated the wall in all its rugged vastness. Its full span came within compass, and in the gloom gathered at the far distance one could imagine it continuing due south to The Tower and the Thames bank, as once it had done, enclosing not a wine vault and floors, but a whole city. The height, over 20 feet, makes the wall most imposing, though here neither foundations nor the upper rampart can be seen. This is the inner face of the wall, and high up in the thick mass someone, ages ago, has cut a loophole, now filled in with glass toned to a dirty yellow, through which penetrates a little of London's gloom—it seems absurd to call these dismal beams daylight. The rough masonry visible is mostly Norman or Middle Ages, the larger stones casting ragged lines of shadow, and covering nearly all is a velvet of moss, the result of exposure for many generations to the fumes given off by generous wines. Either this moss grows black or else takes its sable hue from the City's grime, but it is largely pitted with a fungus of pure white, and Nature's

drapery of black and white makes the wall look even more ancient than it is. What changes of times and men this centuries' old wall has known!

We went below ground, down into abysmal darkness, where a candle flickered feebly, and a way was found with difficulty amid rows of casks of wine and spirits, still with the wall in touch. Nothing Norman or mediæval here. We were back farther in London's story, in a bit of Roman London, with the wall as the Roman builders left it, though parts of it had been cased by later hands. I traced the bonding courses of red tile in the wall, scratching away the clinging fungus to bring out the deep red colour, sure evidence of Romans' handiwork, and the Kentish rag stones they used for facing, the hard mortar with which the mass is bound together. A shallow shaft had been sunk recently a few feet, at the instance of some antiquaries, to decide a vexed question, and examining the side so exposed, I was left in doubt whether what I saw was the core of the wall or the prepared foundation, till I learnt that loose sand and gravel had been reached, and there was no longer room for doubt. This was the very bottom of the wall.

It was a climb thence to the top, 35 feet overhead, where there was that I most wished to see, for Roman work had become familiar elsewhere.

Any hole made in City ground has ever acted as a lodestone to attract me towards a possible find, and few opportunities have been allowed to slip by; the hunter's spirit, I suppose, surviving in the townsman; and I have climbed down more ladders to explore the buried town than I have toiled up City staircases. That day it was well worth going high, for nowhere else in London save in this one vast fragment is the top of the City wall preserved. It proved to be still stone, with some chalk, and thus much older than the considerable reparation of the wall undertaken in the year 1465, when Ralph Joceline was Mayor of London, and the battlements where repair was needed were replaced with brick. It stirred the imagination to notice the sentinel's walk, with a protecting bulwark breast high. Of course I paced its length, the temptation being irresistible, just as the sentinels of London had done, when no warehouse roof intervened but the blue sky of heaven was open above, and there was a view from this height over the City's narrow streets and the red-tiled roofs of the crowded houses, so low and mean, and the moving people, and the Thames wound by, crossed by a single bridge, and green fields outside the City lay at one's feet.

Left and right, to and fro, so the sentinel had paced this walk centuries ago, and once again I

saw the wall as a real defence of the City. Great butts of port which obtruded themselves, and the smaller brandy casks, identified by the many tapering loops in the French fashion of cooperage, were shut out of mind, and the reality of Old London, walled and guarded, came back as I recalled certain orders given to the Warder of the Gate at Ludgate which I had read in the City Letter Books at Guildhall. They were six centuries old (1312 A.D.) for Edward II. then reigned in England :

" That you, together with two men of the watch, well and fittingly armed, be at all hours of the day ready at the gate, within or without, down below, to make answer to such persons as shall come on great horses,[1] or with arms, to enter the City ; and that you set a guard above the gate, upon the leads thereof, to look out afar, that so you may be the better warned when any men at arms approach the gate. And if any do approach in manner aforesaid, then let the chain be drawn up without, and answer be given in this manner :

" ' Lordlings, the King has given charge to us that no person shall enter his city by force of arms, if he have not special warranty from him. Wherefore, sirs, we pray you that you will not take this amiss ; but as for you persons, you who are upon your palfreys, and you folks who come without bringing great horses or arms, you may enter, as being peaceful folks.'

" And if they will not thereupon turn, then let the portcullis be quickly lifted by those of your people above, that so those other persons may in no way enter."

[1] On war-horses, or chargers.

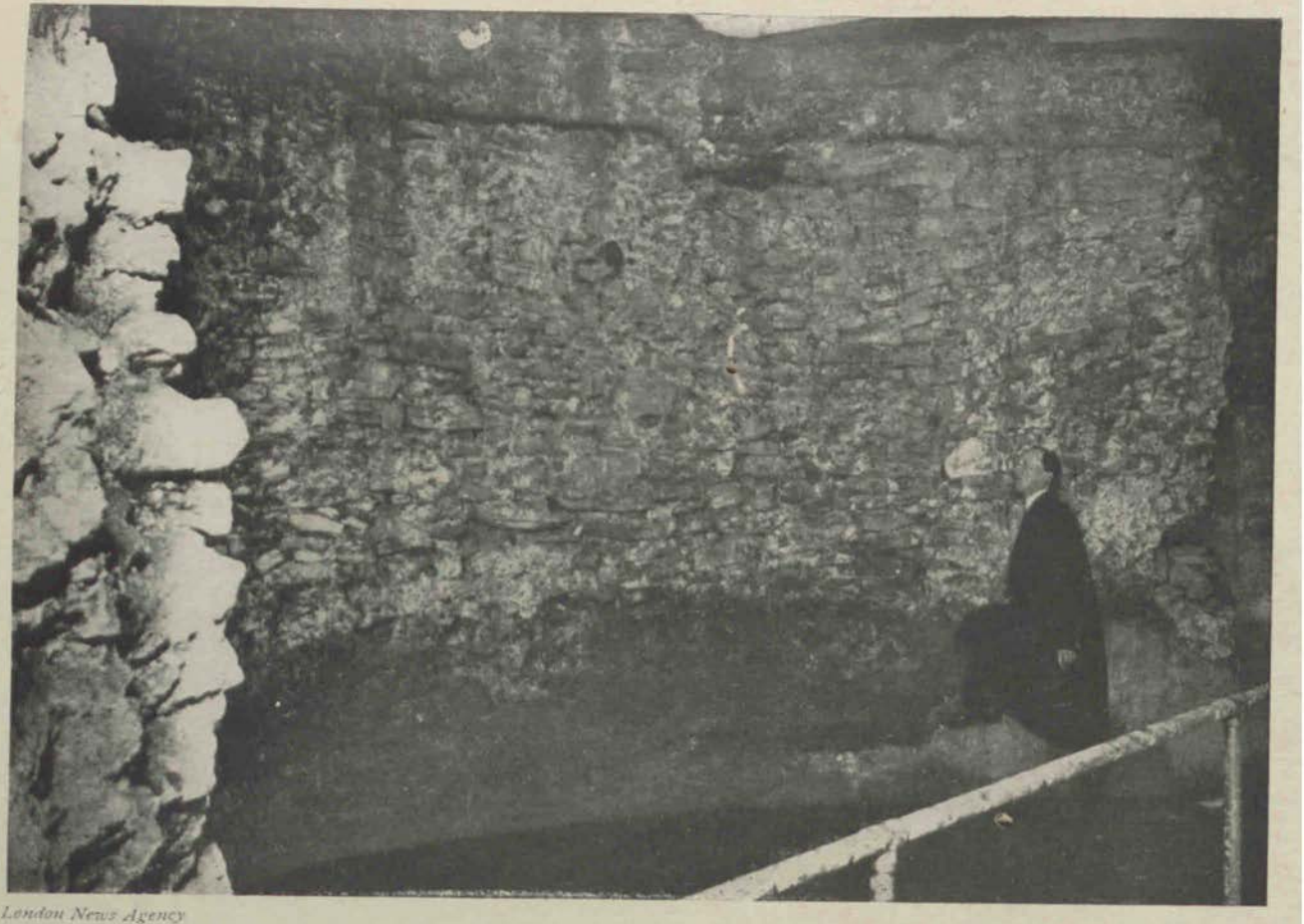
Froissart might have written those sentences. From the rampart on which I stood the sentinel had so looked out afar to see what bodies of men at arms in hostile array were approaching London.

One other passage I venture, to recall this guarded Old London. Mayor Ralph Joceline and many City masons and tylers are busy repairing the wall, mere human ants tinkering with this massive and time-defying structure, so much greater and more enduring are the works of man than himself. John Stow, the first of London antiquaries, is speaking: "For to bere the charge there he caused to be graunted by Comon Counseill, that every citezein shud pay every sonday duryng his yere vd. And above that, by his politik meanys caused dyvers ffelyshippes of worship to make every ffeliship a certayn length of the walle; and to Encorage theym he began wt his owne ffelyship which made the wall from Allhalow in the wall unto Bisshoppysgate; and like wyse other ffelishippys theyr partes; and or his yere came to ende he had made a goode parte of that is newe made beside provysion of lyme and Bryk, which he also provyded for in the more the same yere." It was a considerable work, for though Joceline was Mayor in 1465, it was not until twelve years later that the City gave authority to sell such

brick and lime as remained after the repairs, and to reimburse the patriotic mayor his expenses.

And in Henry VIII.'s reign, at the setting of the great Midsummer Watch, the Alderman of each ward mustered his citizen soldiers and at their head marched out of the gates to the common field between Mile-end and Whitechapel, where the "battles" were assembled (they became battalions later) and military exercises practised.

I am but a poor story-teller, thus at the outset to have concentrated attention upon the most perfect length of the City Wall, discounting interest in others; but there is one fragment elsewhere I would put at its side, for it is impossible to relegate it to any secondary place. It lacks the height of the magnificent section already described, and has not as great length, yet is unique, for here is fine Roman work, handed down to us without flaw from age or destruction. A bastion almost complete, with part of the straight Roman wall, was uncovered when the Post Office acquired a large portion of the ground on which Christ's Hospital had stood behind Newgate Street for the new King Edward Building. These massive remains are concealed in the centre of the open yard over which the mail vans clatter. Happily the Treasury proved human; funds were allotted for preserving this



London News Agency

BASTION OF THE ROMAN WALL OF LONDON
In the yard of the King Edward Post Office, Newgate Street

relic of our first conquerors and building a concrete chamber about it ; and by a written request to the Secretary, General Post Office, E.C.1, permission to visit it is obtained.[1] I entertain the hope that even this restriction may be found unnecessary, and that the public may be free—they would do no harm—to walk in at their will. So far the public are little familiar with it.

Indeed, fortunate are we of this generation to have this relic in our keeping, for standing before it Roman London as a living thing (quite apart from the unrealized creation of the books) comes vividly to mind. This upright bastion, frowning and impregnable, this great thickness of wall, had a City worthy of its strength to guard ; one knows now that Londinium is no mere fiction of historical writers. Modern science lends its aid, for frames of prismatic glass overhead bend the sunlight upon the face of this old wall, which had lain buried from the sun for so many centuries. Its state of preservation is remarkable. Still the stones are grey and white, stones of no mean size in the lower courses, above smaller stones, embedded in a hard mortar about a core of rubble. Above, too, one may trace the rows of bonding tiles, straight as the Roman masons laid them.

[1] Owing to shortage of the Post Office staff, this privilege is withheld till peace conditions are restored.

What joy to be alive to see these things! The half circle sweep of the bastion is almost, but not quite, complete. It seems to rise upon the wet ditch, though in truth there is but an inch or two of undesirable water, which somewhere wells up from the ground within the wall.

A massive relic like this, making its appeal to the eye, tells more of the reality of Roman London than an acre of ineffectual book-writing. The London schoolboy ought to be brought here. With the modern world shut out and shafts of subdued sunlight illuminating the grey bastion and wall, seeing nothing else, his unspoilt imagination will find a proud city behind it, and fill out the picture, adding the human figure that is wanting—a Roman legionary, in steel casque and plume, peering over the top of this masonry to watch who is approaching, and about the battlement the symbols of Roman domination in Britain.

Of the making of the wall there is no history. The task must have engaged thousands of labourers and slaves if it be true, as is surmised, that throughout its length of nearly two miles the wall was built complete within a short period. It is so believed because the workmanship is always the same, never varying, except that here and there yellow tile takes the place of the

red tile. An idea that has been fostered that the wall was built by the Romans shortly before they abandoned Britain, to enable the citizens to defend themselves after the withdrawal of the conquering legions, shows but indifferent understanding of our first conquerors. It is almost certainly a Roman defence against aggression from without, raised perhaps in haste after some experience of grave emergency. We cannot penetrate the mists of antiquity which conceal so much of the foundation of London.

It used to be said that the Romans walled London about 340 A.D. to 360 A.D. There are reasons to believe that the work is two centuries earlier. Every old town in continuous occupation rises in level as the centuries pass, London like the rest, and so to-day the Roman foundations and lower courses of the wall lie from 12 ft. to 19 ft. underground. The kindly soil by burying them has preserved them. A wide ditch before the stout wall added to its strength as a defence. Others came after, but always the masons of the Middle Ages built upon the Roman wall, raising it higher as necessity required but not altering the line, and as the Romans enclosed the City so it afterwards remained. It has had one small extension, and one only, when King Edward I. in the year 1278 gave permission to

the Dominican Friars to pull down the wall between Ludgate and the Thames, and re-erect it so as to enclose their settlement at Blackfriars within the guarded city. It happens for this reason that wherever fragments of London Wall are seen above ground they are of mediæval construction, where deep below they are the original Roman work.

There are other fragments about the City which by using your eyes you may see any day. The longest span above ground is that at the churchyard of St Alphage London Wall, which bears a board stating that it is "The Roman Wall of London." This is strictly true for what is unseen, but that part visible contains nothing that can with certainty be identified as Roman. It is the work of masons of the Middle Ages building above the Roman fabric. The relic is valuable for the clear indication it gives of battlements.

Near by is the spacious churchyard of St Giles Cripplegate—John Milton lies within the church—which with its well-kept lawns and beds of summer flowers is the most delightful Nature spot that the City boasts. There in a corner you will find a stone bastion of London Wall. This also is mediæval work. It is small and insignificant, rising to a height of only a few

feet, but sinks deep into the ground, and is part of a defence that in its day was considered formidable.

Going east again, there is a portion of the old wall seen from Trinity Square, by The Tower, and approached by a yard known as Trinity Place. It is a length of 40 feet, has no great height, and its present condition, showing alternate courses of stones and Roman tile, indicates that it was carefully refaced in the Middle Ages—probably in the fifteenth century restoration. As a bit of old London history, the Society of Antiquaries took this fragment under its care, and persuaded the Commissioners of Woods and Forests to fix the shelter at the top which now guards it from weather damage.

A fifth piece of London Wall stands within The Tower of London, on the ground between the Norman Keep and the river. This fragment, unfortunately, being in an exposed place, has much weathered, and the method of its construction is by no means clear.

In Roman Wall House, No. 1 Crutched Friars, is an excellent and characteristic length of the wall in a basement office, preserved at the sacrifice of some space by an enlightened builder (London's benedictions be upon all such). I learn that to the Sadlers Company gratitude is due. Its face

shows the rows of Roman tiles and Kentish rag stones, so perfect in condition that it is probable an earthen bank was raised against it as soon as it was built. Ages old, the buried wall still does citizen service, for along its line dozens of City houses have been built directly upon it as a foundation—and none better could be desired. Two recent instances in mind are No. 16 America Square, Minories, and No. 41-3 Ludgate Hill. In the latter house the buried wall upon which the rear of the building stands is visible. "Pierced at many points for mains, torn up in places for basements, the old wall yields slowly and sullenly."

Till late as the middle eighteenth century London Wall, though broken in many places, with gaps unfilled, stood guard over the City, coiling its length around the houses, badly dilapidated—still a City Wall. In 1766 the Commissioners of Sewers (a body with a soul like a sewer) applied to Parliament for leave to take down the ancient defence, on the plea that it was detrimental to the health of the City by obstructing the passage and free circulation of air, and thereafter the housebreakers got to work upon it, though leaving a few sections like that at Barber's Warehouses and some others since destroyed. The historical gates went the same way, sold as build-

ing material to whoever would undertake the charge of destroying them. A carpenter bought Ludgate, which had been rebuilt in Elizabeth's reign, for £148, saving the statue of the Virgin Queen now seen over the vestry door of St Dunstan's, Fleet Street, and the stone figures of Lud's sons, preserved at St Dunstan's Hostel, Regent's Park; Aldersgate and Cripplegate went for a mere song. London thenceforward lost its distinction of being a walled City, but a century and a half ago, though it might seem an age.

III

THE SHRINE OF EDWARD THE CONFESSOR

ZEPPELIN nights and the Shrine of Edward the Confessor!—the two things seem whole worlds of time and thought apart. They have been brought into close relation since the European War opened astonished eyes to the depths of barbarism that may exist in a people hitherto deemed civilized. So four years ago it became necessary to protect, as far as was possible without bodily removal, the most sanctified Shrine in our land, lest explosive *kultur*, aimed earthwards out of dark skies, should disturb the Confessor's long rest. Sandbags were brought into Westminster Abbey and piled about the Shrine, and the work done required the temporary removal of its wooden super-structure, exposing to view the cavity which holds the coffin of the Saint.

Most curious and unexpected, and grotesque in its association, there, dropped in upon the coffin lid, was found lying an unposted letter.

It had lain undisturbed well nigh two hundred years, for the date and the handwriting were those of the early eighteenth century. How it got poked away in such a place, or by whom, no one can tell. I suspect a lazy Westminster School boy, entrusted with taking the letter to the mail office, who while sauntering through the Abbey conceived the idea of thrusting it through a crevice into the Shrine, conscious that never in his lifetime would the hallowed grave yield up its secret. Perhaps—horrible thought!—the pocketing of the fee for postage was an incentive.

The letter certainly originated in the School, for it was written by William West, the school barber, and the endorsement outside is to Charles Hart, at the sign of The Crown at Bridgnorth, Shropshire. It is a venial sin to read a private letter after this lapse of time, and to smile at the writer's conventional phrases and quaint spelling, for West, though he lived in a home of learning, had absorbed little of it, and had small art in penmanship. His task was to practise his craft on the shock-headed boys, for which he was given a stipend of but 40s. a year, with an additional 20s. for keeping the clock.

Thus he wrote, and quite briefly:

"Dear frend, I make bould to trouble you with These few Lines to satisfy you I am In good health:

Living in hopes to see you once: in London. . . . So that I should be very g..d: yr Frend William Cole remembers His love to you being my Cheaf Compannyion at the tombs so That I here your in good health wich is the most of my satisfacktion, desiring to hare from you, and if you can conveniantly to send a Cock for a token against Sraftusday will drink your health and eat him for your Saek no more at present. But i rest your loveing frend WILLIAM WEST."

A cock and a bottle for feasting on "Sraf" Tuesday—these, and not the great dead, were the thoughts uppermost in the mind of the College barber and Cole, his chief companion at the tombs. The letter miscarried. And I laughed—shamefaced I confess it, for 'tis a distressing thing to do in the Abbey—as I stood at the Shrine and thought of that depleted feast and the disappointment at not receiving the expected "token," while all the time the missive was lodged before the writer's own nose.

The Confessor lies there, not in mother earth, but raised in this Shrine high above the kneeling pilgrims who for so many centuries have resorted to his tomb. Their feet have worn hollow the stone beneath the arches. Last King of the Royal Saxon line, he passed to his rest at a time ominous with fate for his country and his race. A contemporary chronicler has related how when he was stretched dying in his Palace at West-

"THE MOST SANCTIFIED SHRINE IN OUR LAND"
Saint Edward's protection in the Great War

minster, "amid fruitful trees lying about it," he saw in delirium two holy monks, who foretold to him the coming disasters of the realm, which should only be ended, "when the green tree, after severance from its trunk and removal for the space of three acres, should return to its parent stem and again bear leaf and fruit and flower." [1]

A horror, we are told, of great darkness filled the whole land. The King's burial was hastened on the morning after breath had left his frail body, and that same day Earl Harold, his successor, was crowned. Nine months later Saxon England and Saxon institutions were overthrown by the Norman Conquest.

In the upheaval of all things, the tyranny and bondage forced upon the people by their ruthless conquerors, the subjects of the Saxon Edward

[1] "Amid fruitful trees lying about it"—that is a pleasant glimpse snatched from past centuries of ancient Westminster. Mr Seebohm has ingeniously suggested that only one picture could have conjured up this otherwise unaccountable vision. The green tree was no doubt envisaged by an actual tree, growing out of one of the balks separating the acre strips below Thorney Island, and the uneven glass of the King's window-panes would be likely, as he rose in bed, to sever the stem from its roots and transplant it higher up in the open field, in an acre strip three acres off, restoring it again to its root as he sank back upon his pillow. "The very delirium of the dying King thus becomes the most natural thing in the world when we know that all round were the open fields and balks and acres" (*English Village Community*).

preserved the memory of their mild King with peculiar veneration. The actual man we see only through a web of romance which veils him, and most imperfectly. He was almost an albino. From youth his flowing hair was white; his beard grew white; and in contrast his cheeks of apple red and face frequently flushing gave to him a merry aspect. The chroniclers speak of his thin white hands and long transparent fingers, the touch of which had miraculous power to cure the Evil. He was a visionary and a mystic. The legends that attach to his name are cut in stone in the screen which King Henry VI. built about his Shrine. You trace them one by one, walking by; the legends of a kindly King.

There is that of the heregelt. Edward, going to his Royal Treasury, saw a black demon dancing on the casks containing the gold which his subjects were taxed to pay to maintain a fleet. His mind awakened, he abolished the oppressive tax. In another panel is shown the sleeping King when, in the absence of Hugolin, the steward, a scullion broke into the bed-chamber and rifled the Royal money chest. Edward awoke. "Haste," he said to the thief, "he will not leave you even a halfpenny"; and to Hugolin's remonstrances he replied, "The thief hath more need of it than we —enough treasure hath King Edward!"

Other subjects the mediæval sculptor has figured are the appearance of St John to the two pilgrims, and the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus. A wayside beggar implored the King to bestow alms upon him, for the love of St John. The Confessor had no money, but drew from his hand a ring, "large, royal, and beautiful." This he gave to the beggar, who vanished. Afterwards two English pilgrims making their way through Syria were met by St John, who gave them the very ring that Edward had bestowed upon the supposed beggar, told them to return it to the King, and to warn him that in six months' time he should be with the Saint in Paradise.

The vision which Edward had of the Seven Sleepers turning in their sleep was a warning of the disasters that after his death were to break upon the country.

No one of these or others of the fourteen legends so sculptured is to be found in the contemporary "Life" of the Confessor—the *Vita Æduuardi Regis*, written for his widow—though they were current in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. They are growths about the revered personality of Edward, probably born in that century and a half while the Norman oppression remained, and accepted with unquestioning faith in ages less critical than ours.

Edward was honoured for his unfailing piety, but none can truthfully call him a great ruler.

His word was not to be taken. "There was nothing that he would not promise from the exigency of the time. He pledged his faith on both sides, and confirmed by oath anything that was demanded of him." He was negligent as a statesman. After the long hours he spent in devotions, his pleasures were in hunting and the chase; he quarrelled with his mother Emma, whose large treasure he seized; he was alienated from his wife, and sent her in disgrace to a nunnery. Reared in a Norman Court, he gathered Norman favourites about him, to whom he gave place, though the open hostility of his subjects often denied them power. His English patriotism was doubtful. So far as we are permitted to see, the character of the man was petulant, irresponsible, at times it would seem almost childish.

Such virtues as he had were those of the cloister rather than the throne. Dean Stanley well said: "Edward's claims of interment here rest not on any act of power or fame, but only on his artless piety, and simple goodness. He—towards whose dust was attracted the fierce Norman and the proud Plantagenet, the grasping Tudor and the fickle Stuart, even the independent Oliver, the

Dutch William and the Hanoverian George—was one whose humble graces are within the reach of every man, woman, and child of every time, if we rightly part the immortal substance from the perishable form."

And who shall measure the extent to which the founding of the vast Abbey of Westminster has contributed to building up the name and fame of Edward the Confessor? It has coloured all our conceptions of him. It has fixed his memory in the minds of all subsequent generations—the memory of a King whose personal influence in his reign was slight. "The laws of King Edward" came from stronger hands than his. The reign might have passed as uneventful but for the tragedy (we do not call it so now) which so quickly followed its close. A little religious house that before was standing on the Isle of Thorney he demolished for his new foundation. The Saxon Abbey was stupendous for its time. To it Edward devoted one-tenth of all his possessions. An arch perhaps, some foundation stones, one dark, low passage and a few courses in the claustral buildings—these alone remain.

Edward was near his end when, fifteen years having been spent in building, the auspicious day appointed for the dedication came. He was

absent when Archbishop Stigand performed the consecration ceremony on the 28th December 1065. For eight days longer he struggled with mortal illness, and on the 6th January the white corpse, attired in regal robes, with a crucifix of gold, a gold chain round the neck and pilgrim's ring on the finger, was laid in the ground before the high altar within the white walls of the Abbey, then bearing fresh marks of the mason's tools. A plain stone sealed the sepulture—the stone upon which later that same year the Norman Conqueror stood and swore over the body of the Confessor to protect his English subjects.

For eight and a half centuries the Abbey has grown about the mortal remains of its founder, in arcades of stone and rich carving and stately tombs; and more—for the great dead who have been carried there have become as much a part as its own walls. The Confessor's sleep is undisturbed, though far back in our history thrice has the sepulture been moved, and at least on four occasions curious eyes have beheld the Saint's body—possibly on more. Years before the Church's decree was given, the Confessor was venerated as a Saint by the people, and in the reign of the first Henry the grave was opened by the King's order to see if, as was popularly believed, the body remained uncorrupt. Bishop

Gundulf, who stood by, then plucked out a hair from the long white beard.

The first translation of the Confessor's remains followed the canonization, and took place at midnight, the date the 13th October 1163. It was an occasion such as the monkish chroniclers loved to dwell upon, and so, from texts in vile Latin, we know the proceedings in considerable detail. The brethren assembled in the vast Abbey church, the candles lighted, leaving in ghostly darkness the cavernous recesses of the high roof. Psalms were sung and Litanies recited. Lawrence the Abbot and the Prior, in full vestments, tapers in their hands, albs on their bodies, and barefooted, moved in procession to the High Altar, two of the brethren with them, the others continuing their chants. They removed the upper stone of the coffin before the altar, and by the light of their tapers beheld within a man, lying in rich vestments of cloth of gold, having on his feet buskins of purple and shoes of great price; his head and face were covered with a rich covering, interwoven and wrought with gold. The long white beard, inclined to curl, fell descending upon his breast.

Abbot and Prior called in the remainder of the brethren, who with great piety and devotion began, some to touch the head, others the feet,

and others the hands, which they found without any manner of corruption. They raised the corpse from the stone coffin in which it had lain for two years short of a century, placed it on tapestry upon the floor, and moved it to a wooden coffin which had been prepared. The ring was withdrawn from the finger and deposited in the Abbey as a relic. A miracle was performed. Benedict, a clerk, and John, a layman, suffering from demoniacal possession, were led forward, and upon sight of the chest the demons were immediately cast out. The Saint's remains were exposed for veneration in the choir. If a learned clerk of a later generation does not libel, the rich funeral vestments were removed from the body and fashioned into three magnificent copes—a remarkably irreverent proceeding.

Henry II., Thomas à Becket, Henry Bishop of Winchester and others supported the body of St Edward as he was borne in procession to the Shrine which the King had erected, "all glittering with gold and silver."

Henry III. built the Abbey as for the greater part we know it, and for it conceived a new Shrine for the founder more resplendent than anything known in his day, which should be the central object, focussing all attention amid these towering masses of masonry. It is the

Shrine before which we stand to-day, broken, sadly despoiled of its decoration, the golden feretory which had closed upon the Saint's coffin replaced by a mere wooden tabernacle, and even that unfinished; still a priceless relic, unique. In Westminster alone in England, it was long believed, did you find the corpse of a canonized saint preserved still in his shrine, after the pitiless spoilation which accompanied the Reformation.[1] "Petrus Romanus Civis" signed the Shrine—Peter the citizen of Rome, thought by some to be Peter Cavallini. His was the general design of the whole, the marble and red poriphery of the base, the sculpture and elaborate decoration. He did not fashion the golden top, which may have been the task of Odo, the King's goldsmith, and his son Edward, or perhaps of Richard Abel. The little Shrine, its measure the length of a man, is believed by Professor Lethaby to have cost Henry III. the equivalent of from £60,000 to £80,000 of our money.

While the Abbey rose tall and wide under the hands of the masons, the preparation of the

[1] It has been pointed out by Miss E. K. Prideaux (*Arch. Journal*, lxiv. 119) that there is one other instance in England where the bones of a saint escaped the destruction which was so horribly complete. The body of St White, or Candida, remains undisturbed in the original shrine in the church of Whitchurch Canonicorum, Dorset.

Shrine was Henry's peculiar and personal care. It was many years in accomplishment. Early as 1241, twenty-eight years before it received the Confessor's remains, a wooden basis for the golden feretory was fashioned, and £258 was spent "in the work of St Edward's Shrine." Rarely a year passed in which the King's piety did not make some addition to its precious ornaments and jewels. Now it was a gold image of St Edmund, crowned, having two great sapphires; again a king, with a great garnet in his breast and other stones; the Blessed Virgin and her Son, set with rubies, emeralds, sapphires and garnets; five angels of gold; an image of a king with precious stones and enamelled and jewelled crown; a Majesty; a figure of St Peter, and more like. The Queen gave an image of the Virgin, with emerald and ruby. Almost every inch of the marble basement was covered on its surface by mosaic, bright in colour, and wrought in the most elaborate patterns. The last may still be traced in places by imprints left in the cement, where the tesseræ have been picked out by despoilers, tempted by the rich yellow and golden tones of the cubes. Hardly a foot of the original mosaic remains. An inscription was carried round the frieze, formed by larger pieces of deep blue glass, set in gold mosaic.

At length Abbey church and Shrine were ready for the translation; the great nave still awaited completion. That nothing might be wanting, earth was brought from the sacred places of Palestine, a mound was reared, tumulous like, and upon its summit the Confessor's Shrine was erected. Resplendent in colour, with glittering jewels and mosaics, its golden feretory catching and reflecting the shafts of the sun, the Shrine, centrally placed in the sanctuary of the new minster, blazed all down its long vistas (the screen which now so largely conceals it dates from Henry VI.).

Like the Confessor himself, Henry had grown old during the long years in which he watched the building of the Abbey church of Westminster that was to be his monument. His reign was near its end. It is not necessary to recall here the magnificent ceremonies on the 13th October 1269, when the coffin of St Edward was borne by the King, his brother, and his two sons to the spot where, save for one short interval, it has remained ever since; the curious may read of them in the mediæval chronicles. The sacred relics of the Abbey were deposited in a chapel near the Shrine, where now stands the Chantry of Henry V. They included a phial containing some drops of the Holy Blood, a stone showing

the marks of the Saviour's feet, and a girdle of the Virgin.

Three years later King Henry III., laden with years and cares, passed to his own rest, and by his burial beside Edward's Shrine was the first of the illustrious line of England's Kings who in death have grouped themselves about the Confessor.

The Reformation came, and religious broil. The monks of Westminster fled. Again the coffin of Edward the Confessor was moved—taken from its Shrine and buried in the ground, though whether by the monks as a measure of precaution before they dispersed, or by authority of King Henry VIII. is by no means clear. Some distinction seems to have been made for this Saint of the line of England's Kings. The sheriffs and magistrates of the various counties received from Cromwell explicit orders. They were to repair severally to the cathedrals, churches, or chapels in which any shrine might be. The relics, reliquaries, gold, silver, or jewels which it contained they were to seize and send to the King. They were charged to see with their own eyes the shrine itself levelled with the ground, and the pavement cleared of it. St Thomas à Becket's shrine at Canterbury being so despoiled, the martyr's bones were torn from the tomb, burnt to powder, and scattered by the winds.

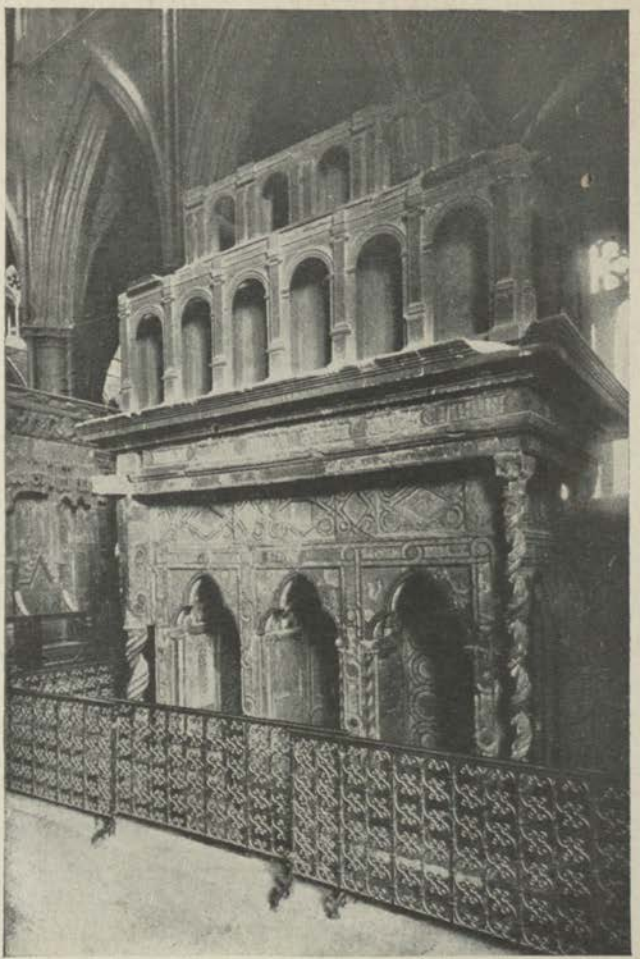
It is probable that the substantial lower part of Edward's Shrine at Westminster, including the arches, was left in its place undisturbed. For the rest, the newcomers in authority within the Abbey, blindly hating all things papistical, broke the Shrine, despoiled it of its jewels and mosaics, and carried away the golden feretory, which presumably was melted down. Gold images of the Confessor and St John, which had stood before the Shrine upon the twisted pillars, still surviving, and many other figures of pure gold, were removed to the Royal Treasury for the same purpose.

So the Shrine remained—empty, desolate, pitiful—till the accession of Queen Mary brought back to Westminster the old faith. The convent was re-established for a brief spell. Abbot Feckenham devoted himself to building up again the Confessor's tomb so far as limited means allowed. The golden feretory could not be replaced, so large an expenditure being beyond the means of Queen or Church, and a wooden tabernacle was raised where it had stood, rather, it would seem, as a suggestion for something better than with lasting intention, for it is still unfinished. On the 20th March 1557, with a hundred lights, King Edward the Confessor "was reverently carried from the place that he

was taken up where he was laid when the Abbey was spoiled and robbed, and so he was carried, and goodly singing and censing as has been seen, and Mass sung."

Indications abound of the haste with which the restoration of St Edward's Shrine was performed. Feckenham, being unable to replace the mosaics, filled the cavities with plaster, which afterwards was painted over. The cornice appears to be his own addition, and at one corner was made from what seem to be pieces of window tracery. A fragment of the original cornice was recovered in 1868, built into the wall of Westminster School, and has been returned to its place. The twisted pillars have been misplaced by the Marian restorers as if intended to help support the retabulum. Canon Westlake, who conducted a recent examination of the Shrine, has pointed out that two movable stones have place in the frieze. Their purpose still remains a puzzle, his suggestion being that they were made so that objects brought by the worshippers could be held in contact with the Saint's coffin. To this day a candle held at one side of the Shrine shows a thin ray of light above the coffin head.

Happily the religious intolerance of the sixteenth century, so hard and bitter, has died



THE SHRINE OF THE CONFESSOR
In the Chapel of the Kings, Westminster Abbey

down. Elizabeth was content to leave the Shrine unmolested as it was left by Mary's and Feckenham's hands, doing nothing herself; the wooden tabernacle, the plaster filling replacing the mosaic, and other evidences of restoration still seen are their work. Feckenham piously rewrote the inscription, of which only a few letters of the original remain.

Fate decided that once again the Confessor's grave should be disturbed, this time by pure accident. Workmen lowering the scaffolding in the Abbey which had been raised for King James II.'s Coronation in 1686 carelessly allowed a heavy baulk of timber to fall upon the temporarily uncovered Shrine. It broke a hole in the coffin lid about six inches in length by four inches broad, above the right breast. No attention was paid for a space of six or seven weeks, when report of the matter reached one Henry Keepe, who reared up a ladder and proceeded to explore —in plain English, to rifle the tomb. Keepe, who writes himself "gent," was an Abbey chorister, and author of *Monumenta Westmonasteriensia*, a tiresome and inaccurate volume, but he had so little shame in his proceeding that he actually printed, under a pseudonym, a pamphlet about it, now the rarest of finds for a bibliophile.

"I look't into the coffin," Keepe naïvely con-

fesses; "and found all things answerable to the report; and put my hand into the hole, and turning the bones (which I felt there) I drew from underneath the shoulder-bones a Crucifix richly adorned and enamelled, and a gold chain of four and twenty inches long, unto which it was affixed, the which I immediately show'd to my friends, they being as much surprised and gladly admired the same as myself. But I was afraid to take them away with me till such time I had acquainted the Dean as the governour and chief Director of our church; And thereupon I put them into the coffin again, with a full resolution to inform him."

The Dean was not then to be found.

"Fearing that this holy treasure might be taken thence by some other persons, and so concealed by converting it to their own use, I went (about two or three hours after) to one of the Quire, who immediately accompanied me back to the monument, and from whence I again drew the aforesaid Crucifix and Chain, and showed them him, who beheld them with admiration. . . .

"At the time, when I took out of the coffin the aforesaid cross and chain, I drew the Head to the hole, and view'd it, being very sound and firm, with the upper and nether jaws whole and full of Teeth, with a list of gold above an inch

broad in the nature of a Coronet, surrounding the Temples; there was also in the coffin white linnen, and gold colour'd flowr'd silk, that look't indifferent fresh, but the least stress put thereunto shew'd it was well nigh perish't. There were all his Bones, and much dust likewise, all which I left as I found, taking only thence along with me the Crucifix and the Gold-Chain."

Keepe retained these precious relics in his possession for three weeks and five days, after which he showed them successively to the Archbishop of York, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Sir William Dugdale and others, and eventually the finder was permitted to present them to the King. "And being no sooner introduced into his Majesty's closet (where I had the honour to kiss his Royal hand) but upon my knees I delivered them with my own hands to him, which his Most Sacred Majesty was pleased to accept with much satisfaction." Then Keepe withdrew, "leaving them safe as being now in his Royal possession."

How little could the finder forecast events!

These relics of the Saxon King are not at Windsor. James assuredly appreciated their historical value and sanctified association. Chain and crucifix are said to have been on his person

when he fled from his Throne, and as he made for the sea coast and exile they were rifled by the Faversham fishermen. They have not since been seen. James, however, reigned long enough for directions that he gave for better safeguarding the Confessor's tomb to be carried out. A new outer chest was made for the Saint's coffin, of planks of timber two inches in thickness, having iron bands lengthways and across, and additional clamps at the head and feet. The cavity within the Shrine bears upon its surfaces rough marks of mason's tools, as if it had been enlarged to contain the enlarged coffin. Two iron tie-bars, sealed in the stone, give additional protection, and never is the sepulture likely again to be disturbed.

I wonder how many who pass by realize that amidst the vast company of the dead in Westminster Abbey Edward the Confessor lies, not in the earth, but in his coffin raised high in this Shrine—"like a candle upon a candlestick, so that all who enter into the House of the Lord may behold its light," says an old chronicler.

IV

GHOSTS IN THE TOWER OF LONDON

WHEN darkness descends upon the Tower of London the sharp outlines disappear, and piled masses of masonry take new and fantastic groupings. That is the time for testing nerves. A wind blowing unobstructed over the broad river reaches sings its message among the tops of the high turrets and through the locked gates. The tide lapping the Thames wharves, unseen though but a few yards distant, the occasional stir of the shipping, and the inexplicable sounds of a great city add to the mystery of the night. Out of a break in storm clouds the moon peers down, searching with a silvery light the baileys and sally-ports and prisoners' walks guarded by these strong walls. Then, some will tell you, the dark shadow of an axe steals across the blood-soaked plot of ground on Tower Green, and stands gaunt and erect, silhouetted against the Norman keep.

No, I have not seen the ghostly shadow myself,

Nor have I found any except those who have it on hearsay, but this is one of the traditions of The Tower; and there are many. If substance there be in the belief that distracted ghosts revisit the scenes of their great sorrows, assuredly upon no spot on earth do they congregate more thickly than here. Eight centuries of England's story in tragedy and suffering are isolated within The Tower's encircling walls. Sir Walter Raleigh's phantom is reputed to have been seen flitting noiselessly about the cells and passages of his long captivity. Suddenly the white figure of a woman has appeared upon the execution ground, and as suddenly vanished—one of Henry VIII.'s ill-fated Queens. A sentry, watchful and alert, has fancied that he has heard proceeding from the dungeons of the White Tower, muffled by the immense thickness of the walls, the agonized cries of Guy Fawkes, stretched in torture upon the rack.

All these things are vague and unsubstantial, as ghosts themselves are, grown about the grey walls of the State prison—the results, my reason tempts me to disbelief with the assurance, of strained watching, of a state of expectation of mind that gives form to just what is expected. Indeed, considering its crowded past, the ghosts of The Tower of London are lamentably few.

Three only have I been able to track down that stood out in circumstantial detail before those who witnessed them. First, a Queen's ghost, the Queen of unhappy tragedy and of undying pathos—Anne Boleyn. Her window is still pointed out. It lights a little room in the Lieutenant's Lodgings, facing west, a low ceiled apartment, for it is but eight feet high, roughly fourteen feet square, and panelled throughout with oak. It is kept much in the same state as when Anne Boleyn slept therein her last night on earth. In the year 1864, visiting rounds of the guard within The Tower were being made when the officer came upon the sentry posted underneath this window, a rifleman of the 60th Rifles, lying prostrate and unconscious on the ground.

The man was court-martialled for being asleep at his post, when he said in his defence that a figure in white approached; that he challenged, but the figure came on; that he charged it with his bayonet, and meeting no resistance fell in a dead faint, in which condition the visiting rounds had found him. At the court-martial two witnesses gave evidence that that night they looked out of the window of the Bloody Tower before going to bed. In the clear, cold moonlight they also saw a white figure approach the sentry;

they heard the sentry challenge, saw him charge the figure with his bayonet and then fall to the ground. The court acquitted the prisoner. For several years thereafter other sentries on the spot declared that they had seen the same figure, and the post became of such evil repute that the men tried to avoid it. General Sir George Younghusband, to-day the Keeper of the Crown Jewels, tells the story in his recent book on *The Tower from Within*, it having come to him from the late Major-General J. D. Dundas, then a captain in the 60th Rifles, and it is corroborated very closely by Field-Marshal Lord Grenfell, who was in the same regiment.

The others are, I fear, somewhat ridiculous; sadly falling short of what one has a right to expect a ghost should be in such a place as The Tower. They seem to plead, gibbering, for apology. One of these happened—properly a ghost happens—to none other than a late Keeper of the Crown Jewels himself. Late in life, when in his eighty-third year, Mr Edmund Lenthal Swifte committed to paper the narrative of his eerie experiences, thinking that it should not pass with him to the grave. He was a public official of merit and distinction, who held his post from 1814 till retirement in 1842, and he played a courageous part in saving the Regalia during

a terrible fire that destroyed the Armoury in The Tower in 1841. No one privileged to have known this fine old gentleman, himself the soul of honour, could have questioned the absolute sincerity of the assurance with which he closed his story. "To all which I have set forth," he wrote, "as seen by myself, I absolutely pledge my faith and my honour."

The Regalia in his charge was at the time safe kept in the Martin Tower, a stronghold which forms the north-west angle of the Inner Ward, and there the Keeper had living rooms with his family. How the spectre appeared to him his own words shall tell—

"One Sunday night in October 1817, I was at supper with my wife, our little boy, and my wife's sister in the sitting-room of the Jewel House, which is said to have been the 'doleful prison' of Anne Boleyn [it was not] and of the ten Bishops whom Oliver Cromwell piously accommodated there. The doors were all closed, heavy and dark curtains were let down over the windows, and the only light in the room was that of two candles on the table. I sat at the foot of the table, my son on my right, my wife fronting the chimney piece, and her sister on the opposite side.

"I had offered a glass of wine and water to

my wife, when on putting it to her lips she paused, and exclaimed—

" ' Good God ! what is that ? '

" I looked up, and saw a cylindrical figure, like a glass tube, something about the thickness of my arm, and hovering between the ceiling and the table ; its contents appeared to be a dense fluid, white and pale azure, like to the gathering of a summer cloud, and incessantly rolling and mingling within the cylinder. This lasted about two minutes, when it began slowly to move before my sister-in-law, following the oblong shape of the table, before my son and myself. Passing behind my wife, it paused for a moment over her right shoulder (observe there was no mirror opposite in which she could then behold it). Instantly she crouched down, and, with both hands covering her shoulder, shrieked out, ' Oh Christ ! it has seized me.'

" Even now as I write I feel the horror of that moment. I caught up my chair, striking at the ' appearance ' with a blow that hit the wainscot behind her. It then crossed the upper end of the table and disappeared in the recess of the opposite window. I rushed upstairs to the other children's room, and told the terrified nurse what I had seen. Meanwhile other domestics had hurried into the parlour, where their mistress was re-

counting to them the scene, even as I was detailing it above-stairs.

"The marvel—some will say the absurdity—of all this is enhanced by the fact that neither my sister-in-law nor my son beheld the 'appearance,' though to their mortal vision it was as apparent as it was to my wife's and mine."

A disappointing ghost, indeed, raising expectation high, but denying fulfilment. This should have been a new Genii of The Tower, forming mysteriously within the "tube," boiling, bubbling, fretting, taking form gradually before the eyes of the horrified spectators, bursting his bonds, growing expansive and terrible, filling the room with his loathsome presence, like that other genii in the famous Eastern story of the Fisherman and the Bottle cast up by the sea. It was an airy monster taking shape from the agitation within a cylindrical column just in the same mysterious way that appeared before the Baron de Guldenstubbe, familiar to students of the occult. What might have developed but for that unseemly blow struck with the chair, denting the wainscotting, none can tell.

Notes and Queries discussed the matter some half a century ago, with much learning, but the only materialistic explanation suggested was that of a column of fog descending a damp chimney.

Mr Swifte scornfully repelled the idea. "As if (said he) the densest fog that ever descended could have seized one of us by the shoulder!"

The remaining ghost is still less substantial. It appeared at the stroke of midnight—befitting hour!—to a sentry keeping guard before the Jewel House door, which stood in shadow beneath a stone archway—"as ghostly a door," says Mr Swifte (for this apparition also occurred in his time) "as ever was opened or closed on a doomed man." The sentry took alarm, as well he might, when the figure of a huge bear issued from beneath the door. Desperate, he struck at it with his bayonet, which stuck fast in the oaken door; then the man swooned, and his comrades, hastening to the spot, carried him senseless to the guard-room. He was neither asleep nor drunk. But a few moments before the bear emerged he had spoken to a fellow soldier; he bore a high character for bravery and good conduct. Mr Swifte saw him next morning, trembling and haunted by fear, a man changed beyond recognition. In a day or two the poor fellow died. The body was interred with military honours in the Flemish burial-ground at St Katharine's by The Tower. Several persons to whom the man spoke attested his tale, the details of which had fixed themselves in his mind, and did not vary.

Till less than a century ago The Tower of London was the "Zoo" of the City, possessing cages stored with a curious variety of wild animals, often the gifts of foreign potentates, here royally confined. Who shall decide whether or not this was the shade of some ill-treated Bruin?

The late Keeper of the Crown Jewels, it will be noticed, had a pleasant tolerance for ghosts. These, such poor things as they are, are the authenticated phantoms of The Tower of London, and to my mind they raise a question worth pondering over, for there are many persons among us to-day who pin their faith on ghosts. It is this. Not in all England's broad acres is there another area so small that is so crowded with the tragedy of life as is The Tower, nowhere where the shades of men and women violently cut off in their prime should so thickly congregate—not Rome's Coliseum, not the frowning Fortress of St Peter and St Paul in Petrograd, no place, I question, in the world.

"In truth, there is no sadder spot on earth than this little cemetery," wrote Lord Macaulay of the sheltered church of St Peter ad Vincula within The Tower. "Death is there associated, not, as in Westminster and St Paul's, with genius and virtue, with public veneration and with

imperishable renown; not, as in our humblest churches and churchyards, with everything that is most endearing in social and domestic charities: but with whatever is darkest in human nature and in human destiny; with the savage triumph of implacable enemies, with the inconstancy, the ingratitude, the cowardice of friends, with all the miseries of fallen greatness and of blighted fame. Thither have been carried through successive ages, by the rude hands of gaolers, without one mourner following, the bleeding relics of men, who had been the captains of armies, the leaders of parties, the oracles of senates, and the ornaments of Courts."

This is no more than true, and of all that great company of the silent who should lie uneasily—queens, statesmen, warriors, prelates and many whose kinship has been their only crime—there is not one whose phantom, living again that last bitter hour on earth, has been seen, on testimony that can be accepted by reasoning men. Lenthal Swifte's poor shapeless apparition is the very quintessence of feebleness, when this ground should have yielded ghosts so strong. The Tower of London should be the muster ground of ghostly battalions. There is none. It is watched and guarded night and day, centuries in and out, as no other place is watched. If great London

cannot provide one ghostly reappearance that will satisfy, if The Tower itself—assuredly the testing-place, if such there can be—has none, then I decline to be fobbed off with stories of ghostly figures awakening sleepers in haunted chambers of ancient country houses, or moving noiselessly along wainscotted corridors. London born, of three generations of Londoners, I deny all country ghosts.

V

THE DOMESDAY BOOK

1. What is the name of the mansion ?
2. Who held it in the time of King Edward ?
3. Who now holds it ?
4. How many hides are there ?
5. How many teams—in demesne—of the tenants ?
6. How many villeins—bordars—slaves ?
7. How many freemen—sokemen ?
8. How much wood—meadow—pasture ? How many mills ? How many fisheries ?
9. How much has been added or taken away ?
10. How much was the whole worth ? How much is it worth now ?
11. How much had or has each freeman or sokeman there ? All this is to be given in triplicate ; that is, in the time of King Edward, when King William gave it, and at the present time.
12. And if more can be had than is had ?

THE questions are twelve in number, and with them William the Conqueror's Commissioners spread over the land, and from the answers given was compiled the Domesday Book. I much doubt if the stern King himself ever looked into these pages of remarkable penmanship. He had reigned twenty years in England when at the Salisbury gemot

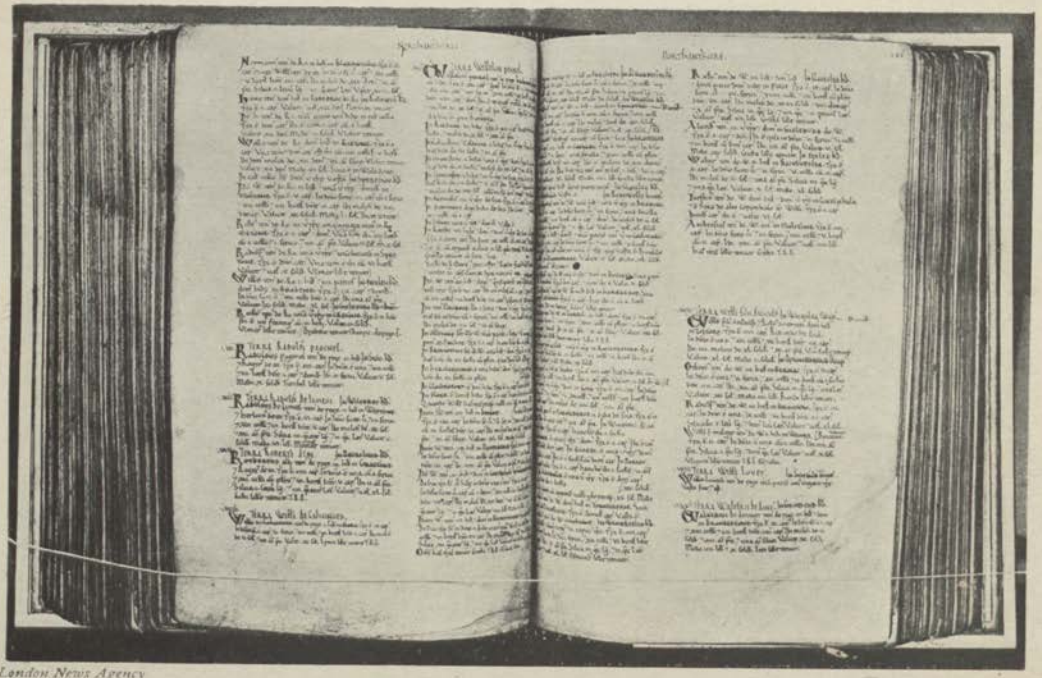
at Michaelmas, 1086, it was made known that the inquiry was complete, leaving, one may suppose, the vast work of digestion and arrangement still to be done. In the following spring an invasion of his territories required the Conqueror's presence in Normandy. As he rode through the flaming streets of Mantes, a fall from his horse hastened his end, and he was borne to the tomb in the Cathedral at Caen which is sought, I boldly say, by more travelled Englishmen—many more—than seek his great Survey in Chancery Lane. Quite characteristic of English indifference to our historical monuments is the fact that Domesday Book should be lying in the City of London, in a public place, accessible to all without charge, and at no more trouble than is required by signing one's name—and nobody sees it, or even can tell where it is.

From the nobodies I except all historians and antiquaries, dull people like myself, given to moments of sly enjoyment in company with the dusty records of centuries long since dead; travelling Americans who underline Domesday in their guide-books before losing sight of Nantukket Point and facing the open Atlantic; by chance a few others, but those very few. Yet it is not a long journey to Chancery Lane, nor is the hazard great, to the Public Record

Office, wherein the Domesday Book is kept, and any week-day afternoon between the hours of two and four will serve. The attendant at the Record Office Museum (suppressing a yawn) will be glad to see you. At least, he has always gladly welcomed me, as a rare specimen of the Englishman so seldom to be found there.

No doubt the indifference is largely due to want of announcement, for the Record Office Museum, with Domesday and a thousand other historical documents of surpassing interest—Trafalgar and Waterloo despatches, Guy Fawkes's confession under torture, the Papal Bull which made our Kings Defender of the Faith, and what not else?—does not advertise. It seems, being Governmental, ashamed to herald its existence. That is our Government way. The travelled Englishman does not go into Chancery Lane, finding it too near at hand.

There are two Domesday volumes, the large book and the small book. They lie open under glass, tempting interpretation, but the dull edge of your little remembered school Latin breaks against the text, until familiarity has been won with the excessive contraction that is practised in every word, not in the Latin alone, but also in the Saxon and Norman terms that are used to signify measures. If, being thus warned, you

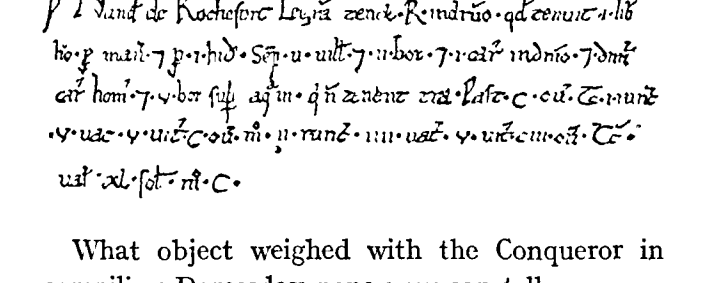


London News Agency

DOMESDAY BOOK: THE LARGE VOLUME

In the Public Record Office Museum, Chancery Lane, open 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

think your learning still fresh enough for the test, take this passage from Domesday and translate it for me into running English. I have reproduced it from the manuscript as well as my unskilled hand allows—



What object weighed with the Conqueror in compiling Domesday none now can tell.

The great Survey has surprisingly little history, and almost all that is known of it is drawn from the book itself. The accident that has preserved what is believed to be a full transcript of the original returns of several of the Cambridgeshire Hundreds alone has given to us the questions asked. Much also is suggested by a study of the Exon Domesday (once kept at Exeter, and therefore so called) which contains a copy of the original returns of the five western counties, and by comparison of the contents of the separate volumes of Domesday itself. All this, I allow, is solid fare. "Muckle thought and deep speech

with his wise men" King William had before he determined thus to map out the values of the whole area of England that acknowledged his sway.

This at least we know, that the step excited shuddering fear and grave suspicion among his English subjects, and not unreasonably. They knew their ruthless master—none better. They were fearful lest the inquiry should forebode new encroachments upon English liberties, and yet further confiscations from the people. It is written plain as day in the brief mention made by a nameless scribe in the *Saxon Chronicle*, whom I quote below—

"After this the King had muckle thought and deep speech with his wise men about this land, how it was set, and with what men. Then he sent his men over all England into each shire, and let them find out how many hundred hides were in that shire, or what the King had himself of land or cattle in those lands, or what rights he ought to have in the twelve month from that shire. Also he let them write how much his archbishops had, and his bishops, and his abbots, and his earls, and, though I tell it longer, what or how much each man had, that was landsitting in England, in land or cattle, and how much it was worth. So very narrowly did he let them speir it out that there was not a hide nor a yardland, nor—it is shameful to tell, though he thought it no shame to do—so much as an ox or a cow or a swine was left, that was not set down in his writ: and all these writs were brought to him afterwards."

The Royal Officers spread themselves over the country, armed with supreme powers. No mitred

Abbot, lord of vast lands with key to Heaven and hell, no bishop, no priest should hold himself exempt from their inquiry, no Baron be so formidable that he should dare refuse answer to their summons, nor was any man too humble to bear his testimony if it was required. It was the King's command they bore, which all should obey. Their work being accomplished, the Royal Officers embodied its results in the volumes of Domesday, written on the parchment with black ink and often with red initials and interlines; and business-like, without ornament. Then they disappear. They did not attach their names. They are unknown. But from documents of a later date we regain the styles and names of a few. It was Remigius, Bishop of Lincoln, Henry of Ferrars, Walter Giffard, and Adam fitz Hubert, brother of Eudo the Steward, who "came to inquire into the counties" of Worcester and others neighbouring with the Conqueror's writ; and the Bishops of Winchester and Coutances headed the Domesday Commission for Cambridgeshire and the East Midlands—all men of weight, learned with the little learning that was attainable in the eleventh century.

They went into the town of the shire and the county, called together the great shire moot and the county court, and read the Royal writ cloth-

ing them with authority. The Sheriffs attended, officers of the King's own lands, the Barons who held their lands direct from the King and their French sub-tenants, all those who owed suit to the hundred moot, and the priest, the reeve, and six villeins from every vill, and these upon oath gave the information the Commissioners required. A jury was empanelled to take the evidence. Thus the inquiry proceeded, Hundred by Hundred, each Hundred providing its separate jury. The questions asked I have already given. A careful analysis by Mr Round of the names of the Cambridgeshire jurors has led him to the conclusion that one-half of them were Norman and the other half were English. "Conquerors and conquered were alike bound by their common sworn verdicts."

The impartial justice with which the inquiry was administered stands out conspicuously, evident to the most casual observer. First come the holdings of the King himself, then those of the Churchmen and religious houses, then those of the Barons, and following in order the lands of women, of the King's serjeants, of the few English thegns who retained land, and so forth. The Royal Officers questioned, and the scribes wrote down the description of each separate estate. They gave the measure of each, how many hides of land it contained, what plough-land, what

meadow and pasture, what woods, what fisheries, what number of men and ox-teams it supported, what tax it paid. Often, as might be anticipated in a turbulent age, and so soon after the wholesale confiscations which attended the conquest of England, they found rights disputed. These they reported. The Royal Officers held no powers as law-givers, to do justice between the baron and the weaker neighbour, whose land he had wrongfully seized, to recompense the layman despoiled of his possession by the Church, or to decide as often the merits of disputes between churchmen themselves. Their authority was limited to inquiry and report; and so they were content impartially to write down the disputed titles to land—the *clamores*—often in a separate section, treating the people of each race alike, leaving it to others to decide wherein the right lay.

County by county the inquiry was made complete as the Royal Officers travelled in separate parties from one to another. Its results are contained, as already said, in two volumes, the great and the small, and the belief has been held that the larger volume was compiled first; its companion, much less exquisite in penmanship and somewhat confused in order, seems at first glance to have been more carelessly done—perhaps after

the King's death. The small volume contains the returns of three East Anglian counties. Modern study has substantially agreed that this arrangement must be reversed, and has assigned to the small volume the earlier date.

For one thing, it contains much detail not to be found in the larger book. It gives a census of live stock in the three eastern counties it surveys—Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk—assisting to make quite a vivid picture of farm life in England so many centuries ago; what numbers of hackneys, oxen, sheep, swine and goats, even hives (then so valuable for sugar) each estate supported. This information is not preserved for the rest of England. In Suffolk the names of individual freemen are given. There is much to suggest that the small volume is practically a complete copy of the original returns. Carried out for all England on this scale, the work would have bulked large, being inconvenient for reference. Perhaps a word fell from the King that his interests were purely fiscal, and would as well be served by a simpler plan. Whatever the cause, the scope of Domesday has undergone alteration. Some part of the information which the Commissioners had been at such pains to collect was not judged worthy of preservation, and the result is that the large volume, as com-

pared with the small, is baldly statistical, arid in its contents, and of considerably less interest.

How full is the picture drawn of East Anglia an extract from the Survey of Essex will show. These are the lands of Robert Greno at Rainham, in the Hundred of Chafford—

"Renaham, which was held by Aluard as a manor and as 3½ hides, is held of R[obert] by Robert. Then 4 villeins; now 5. Then and afterwards 6 bordars; now 4. Then 2 serfs; now none. Then as now 2 ploughs on the demesne. Then the men had between them 2½ ploughs; now 1. Then 3 rounceys, and 14 beasts, and 6 swine, and 100 sheep; now 4 rounceys, and 11 beasts, and 24 swine, and 80 sheep, and 12 hives of bees. It was then worth 6 pounds; and when received (the same); it is now worth 4 pounds. And 1 hide was held by 1 free man who afterwards forfeited it because he committed theft; and (it) was in the King's hand(s). But Robert 'lascivus' seized it as the Hundred (court) testifies; then 1 plough (was there); afterwards and now none; it is worth now as then 20 shillings; this is held of R[obert] by the same Robert."[1]

Or again, take this land of Ranulf Peverel in Essex—"Peverel of London," a French baron whose power is indicated by the large numbers of lands he held in the Eastern counties—

"Hundred of Rochefort [Rochford].

"Legra [Leigh] which was held by 1 free man as a manor and as 1 hide, is held by R[anulf] in demesne.

[1] Mr Round's translation in the *Victoria County History of Essex.*

Then as now 2 villeins, and 2 bordars, and 1 plough on the demesne, and half a plough belonging to the men, and five bordars by the water, who hold no land. There is pasture for 100 sheep. Then 1 rouncey, 5 cows, 5 calves (and) 100 sheep; now 2 rounceys, 4 cows, 5 calves, (and) 103 sheep. It was then worth 40 shillings; now 100."

Look back half a dozen pages. This account above of the land of Ranulf Peverel in Leigh is a translation of the Latin passage there set out—"Hund de Rochefort Legra ten&," etc.

Alunid, a woman, we hear of curiously. She had lands in Buckinghamshire which the Earl Godric gave her to hold so long as he should be Earl, stipulating that she taught his daughter the craft of embroidery.

England was not all conquered. Domesday takes no cognizance of the north-western counties above Cheshire, save that a part of Lancashire is grouped with Cheshire; and the Furness district, the south of Westmoreland and a border area of Cumberland are similarly linked with the West Riding of Yorkshire. This is sufficiently explained by the fact that the area left uncharted, so remote from King William's seat of authority in the south, was not brought under the Crown until the next reign. The omission of Northumberland and Durham is less easily accounted for; though it may well be that the

wasting of the lands there by the merciless hand of the Conqueror, the repeated inroads by the Scots, and the vengeance taken by Odo for the murder of Bishop Walcher in 1080, had left a wilderness, with very little worth the trouble and hazard of surveying.

It is doubtful, for other reasons, if the inquiry really was complete. London is not included in Domesday; it is not mentioned except by the association of certain lands outside its area. There is an engaging mystery about a leaf left blank before the Middlesex Domesday opens. Was it intended for the missing survey of London? —an intention which has never been fulfilled. Chester, Bedford, Oxford, and other boroughs which give their names to shires lead off the returns for those shires. The London survey might have told so much that we are left wanting. But the Royal city of Winchester, and Bristol, Wells, and some others are not returned. They were rich and populous with the small populations of those days. What reason can one assign why they should purposely have been ignored?

The craftsmanship is not always perfect. Mr Ballard (*Domesday Inquest*) has pointed out that the Oxfordshire survey was completed before discovery was made that the lands of William fitz Ansculf and Hascoius Musard in that county

were omitted. Accordingly, these lands were written in, Ansculf's on the marginal space at the foot of one page, and the account of Musard's property stretches across the feet of two other folios. The Oxfordshire estates of the Bishop of Coutances have somehow slipped into the Northamptonshire Domesday. Omitted lands have occasionally been entered on the side margins; there are marginal references to others, for which additional sheets have been inserted in the book; a marginal nρte indicates that something is still to be ascertained, as at Hustedone, *rq qt terræ*—"inquire how many lands?"

The Domesday Book was written at Winchester, where for a century it was kept with other Exchequer records there, then was removed to Westminster, probably in Henry II.'s reign. It was for long safe guarded in the Chapter House, and since 1857 it has been the most precious object of a priceless collection of manuscripts at the Public Record Office in Chancery Lane (admission free, let me once more emphasize, between two and four o'clock afternoons, and all are welcomed) where it is little known and entirely neglected by the great unheeding public of the metropolis.

Of the many problems which Domesday presents, the greatest is still the most elusive. Why

was the Survey ordered? The title might have informed. It has no title. Such reference to itself as is borne on the parchment pages is merely a writ (*breve*) a "survey" (*descriptio*) a "description." Later times coined for it the word Domesday—"the Day of Judgment"—which seems to have been in use as early as the reign of Henry II. Like the sentence to be pronounced on the dreaded Last Day, this was a judgment from which there was no appeal. The courts of law would listen to no questioning of its authority. In centuries when rarely was found a man who could read or write, an almost superstitious reverence grew up for and clothed the authority of Domesday; the robed Judge, seated high above the throng in court, found in the leathern bound volumes the decision which was unalterable as if taken from the Book of Fate.

Ostensibly Domesday is a taxing book, a record of the taxable resources of the Kingdom, setting out the extent of the cultivable land, what portion each man holds, what it was worth in King Edward the Confessor's time, what it was worth when King William gave it, what worth at the time of the Survey. And significant of its preponderatingly fiscal nature is that last question asked of the jurors, "And if more can be had than is had?" The King sought to obtain

an accessible record of the holdings in land of his subjects, that he might tell without delay what sum a tax imposed would bring into the Royal treasury. Each shire and county is set out separately. The record of each is prefaced by a list of names of the holders of land, forming an index. With Domesday at his hand, the King could send out instructions to his officers at the different centres, and the tax be speedily collected. He could compare the return with the sum which ought to result, and see what persons were remiss in payment. As a taxing instrument Domesday is admirably designed, though lacking the summaries and digest found so useful to-day.

Obviously, too, it might serve many other purposes, and it remains a moot question which one was uppermost in the Conqueror's mind when he decided to take the great Survey of his Kingdom, which so set his subjects by the ears. This the learned have hotly disputed. It has been represented by ancient chroniclers that the reason for the Survey was that every man should be satisfied with his own right, and not usurp with impunity what belonged to another. One fears they little knew King William, to attribute to him so beneficent a purpose.

Later scholars have found in Domesday a

preparation for war. They visualize it as a muster-roll of the nation; a record which should place in the King's hands the names of all those who held lands under liability for military service, and an estimate of the followers whom each should bring in his train, the war tax which each estate should bear, the quantity of supplies for the Army it could provide. If that be the purpose, Domesday is a pitiless revelation of the devastation wrought by the Conquest. It has been estimated that the total population shown by Domesday did not exceed 270,000 families. Oxford in the Confessor's time was a town of 721 houses; in that of King William it had shrunk to a hamlet with only 243 poor dwellings. York under the Confessor contained 1607 houses; they had been reduced in number to 967 by slaughter of the people in revolt and waste of the country.

Others, again, have pointed out a wide diversity of objects that Domesday was well calculated to serve—

1. It would give the King exact knowledge of the extent of his own estates in each county, and the income that should be derived from them, thus acting as a check upon his officers;

2. Would tell the King if his gifts had reached their destined recipients; if any magnate had

encroached upon less powerful neighbours; were there English who had retained possession of their lands without his consent;

3. Would provide the King with exact clues as to the personal nexus of the different tenements;

4. Would enable his Exchequer to tell what men were liable to pay tax, and what the amount of each man; if each man was fairly assessed, and if not what was fair assessment.

5. It was a register to which those whose title was disputed might appeal.

The greatness of the conception of Domesday, and remarkable for its accomplishment at so early an age, is that it should have efficiently served, not one, but all these purposes.

Many are the people who, with child-like ignorance of Domesday's scope and unbounded faith in its authority, have turned to it for what it does not contain. The classic instance is that of Samuel Pepys, who wrote in his *Diary* for 21st December 1661: "There I spoke to Mr Falconbridge, to look whether he could out of Domesday Book give me anything about the sea, and the dominion thereof."

VI

AN OLD CITY MERCHANT'S MANSION

WALK the City through, and you will find few surviving of the merchants' houses built immediately after the Great Fire of London when, as a matter of course, the wealthy adventurer who had ships and freights on every sea used his cellars as a convenient store, and had his office on the ground floor, and himself lived with his family in the rooms above. He was a sober person, much engrossed in his affairs, and little addicted to the frivolities and licentiousness introduced with the Restoration. His place of business and residence reflected his own character in its plain exterior, dependent for effect upon its studied sense of proportion, its subdued scheme of decoration, and the air of comfort unmixed with extravagance with which the owner delighted to surround himself.

The flames of 1666 drove many people westwards ; but the City remained what it had always been, the great emporium of trade, for there were

no docks and tall warehouses stretching down the river to take the goods, and the custom, unbroken since the Middle Ages, of living over the shop continued. The goldsmiths, with their "running cashes," still did such banking as there was. It was not until the middle of last century that the last of the merchants separated themselves entirely from their business premises, leaving the City at night to the caretakers.

I recall my venerable friend, the late Sir Thomas Crosby, M.D., an octogenarian when he became Lord Mayor, telling me when over tea-cups and dry toast at the Mansion House we exchanged reminiscences, that in his young days he had a considerable maternity practice among resident City housewives.

Thousands who hurry by Allhallows Barking Church do not know of the existence of one of these fine old merchants' houses which stands unharmed close at hand. No. 34 Great Tower Street is an example of the type of mansion built after the Restoration, as excellent as it is rare. It lies back concealed, with only an open gateway and a few names painted at the side to indicate its presence. Pass into the courtyard, and you have a welcome surprise, for here is a City corner to be treasured. The house is just such a one as must have been erected for a prosperous

Photo. by Mr. Lionel Gowing

NO. 34 GREAT TOWER STREET

Built just after the Great Fire of London in 1666

merchant—a roomy mansion, with spacious apartments and panels and carvings which convey the idea of generations of prosperity in commerce.

The house dates from about 1670. A first impression is that its original surroundings must have been very different. So fine a dwelling would not have been shut off from the street by a screen of mean houses. They must stand upon what was its court or garden; very likely there was a garden also at the rear, perhaps with just a glimpse of the river, though Old London Bridge, itself then covered with houses, was too far distant to come into the picture. All this, however, is an illusion. Wren planned the City on a new model, extinguishing the mediæval features; but the merchants were in too much of a hurry to wait for him, and rebuilt exactly upon the former sites.

Some one with a few thousands of pounds snatched out of the heat and flame which consumed London built No. 34 Great Tower Street. Ogilby's Survey, made within ten years after the Great Fire—Ogilby died in 1676—shows in plan the existing house, and it is hemmed in exactly as it is to-day. Land was too valuable for gardens. There are many other large buildings, mostly modern, similarly concealed among the City's narrow courts.

A picturesque flight of steps gives entrance. The lessees, Messrs Dent, Urwick and Yeatman have the ground floor offices over their extensive cellarage. The firm are wine-merchants, who came here in 1821. It was a wine-house before them, and the atmosphere is redolent of pleasant vintages. The counting-house is the apartment on the right. To walk into it is to take a step backwards to the days when periwigs were worn, and stockings and buckled shoes, and the long coat of figured silk half concealed the rapier. I doubt if the room has been at all altered this past century and a half.

Some early Georgian panelling has replaced the original wainscot, and the arrangement is entirely that of an old-time merchant's office, different from the fashion that now finds favour. The public are separated by an open iron rail, not in the front and in the best of the light, but at the back, though in close proximity to retiring rooms, wherein, over a glass of old Oporto, many a bargain in pipes and butts has been made these past two centuries. Business was not conducted in such fever heat when the Four Georges ruled, but men had time to gossip over the news of the day, and the plan seems to have realized the necessity of this element in commercial success.

It is in keeping with its associations that the

firm should have possessed a link back with the days when the prosperous merchant resided over his shop. Mr W. H. Urwick, the retired senior partner, not only lived with his parents at No. 34 Great Tower Street, but was born there, and when I talked with him shortly before his death in 1914, in his ninetieth year, he recalled many memories of bygone City life. It is curious to find among the firm's letters a complaint of the noise made on the cobbled street by carriages arriving and returning with guests attending the merchant's dinner parties. A vast deal of social life and entertainment has taken place in this and other City houses, which now is entirely foreign to them.

Think how different were the conditions of business well within the old senior partner's memory, when every hogshead and cask had to be sent by sailing ship or along the highway. " Jolly's Wagon " was a favourite means of conveyance in the late thirties of last century, but there were many customers of the firm in places as far inland as Leeds who preferred all the delays of a coast journey to the risks to which the carrier by road was exposed. There was a tremendous deal of peculation in transit. Nothing was easier than for some ill-doer to slip a gimlet into the side of a wine cask, purchaser and vendor at the

journey's end being led into an acrimonious correspondence about short measure.

Mr Urwick told a story of a former partner, Mr Dent, who died at the age of ninety-five a few years ago, and in early life touted with others for orders at the docks, when he was accosted by a gentleman. "I was told I could buy a pipe of port here," he said; "but I see no sign of wine; can you direct me where to go?" The would-be purchaser proved to be the Earl of Lovelace, who married the poet Byron's daughter. A deal was soon effected, and a cheque was being prepared when Mr Dent stopped the writer, remarking that there would be discount. Lord Lovelace glared at him. "Discount!" he roared. "Sir, do you take me for a tradesman?" and he completed the cheque for the full sum. It was an experience not likely to be repeated in these days.

Although it is the times and customs of the Georges that the ground floor most readily brings to mind, there is older material above. The merchant's dining-room and its ante-chamber are at the head of the staircase—with panelled walls brown with age, and carved cornices, and exquisite framework to the doors. Great chimney-breasts bring the fireplaces well out, and the mantelpieces are ornamented with bold carv-

ings, deeply cut, of flowers and fruit and other decorations. A noble dining-room is this, wherein thirty guests might sit at table with comfort—testimony to civic hospitality. Light floods the place through the tall windows. It fell upon these same panels and carvings when grave traders of Anne and William and Mary assembled here, and many a toast was drunk to the prosperous voyage of ships driving homewards before the wind. A counter and desks for clerks intrude in an apartment so obviously designed for good cheer.

Old associations linger here, too. The occupants are Messrs Wilkinson and Gaviller, West India merchants—a firm whose record goes back to the time when West India trade necessarily meant sugar, and sugar meant slaves. Though they came to Great Tower Street only in 1848, their house is a century earlier. With it are linked the fortunes of the Earls of Harewood. Henry Lascelles was its founder in 1743, and with the wealth he brought from Barbadoes he purchased the Harewood estate in Yorkshire, on which his son, created Baron Lascelles in 1790, built the present family seat.

Lascelles recalls the famous election for Yorkshire. It was, perhaps, the most costly election ever fought—stupendous, indeed. Parliament

had been suddenly and unexpectedly dissolved in 1807, and William Wilberforce, the foremost champion of the abolition of the slave trade, who without a contest had represented the county for twenty-three years, was challenged by representatives of the two noble houses of Fitzwilliam and Harewood, namely, Lord Milton (Whig) and Mr Lascelles (Tory).

The bribery that went on makes one gasp for breath! An expenditure that would almost suffice for a General Election throughout England under the niggardly scale now permitted was exhausted over this one seat. Lord Milton began his political career by letting loose a cool £60,000 for the Whig party, and his total bill was said to have exceeded £100,000. Mr Lascelles drew £33,000 from his bankers to start with; following this up by selling out Consols, and the Tory was not less lavish than the Whig. Lord Harewood declared "that he was ready to spend his whole Barbadoes property to obtain the seat." Every voter in the county of broad acres had to be brought into York to poll, and in the competition for carriages the most ramshackle vehicle was worth a little fortune. Hordes of attorneys, agents, and innkeepers were in the pay of one or other of the candidates.

Alarmed, as well they might be, at this out-

pouring of wealth, Wilberforce's supporters organized a national subscription to secure his election, and in ten days £44,450 was contributed. And, despite all, the abolitionist kept ahead during the whole fifteen days that the contest lasted, and won, the final return being :—

Wilberforce	11,806	votes.
Milton	11,177	,,
Lascelles	10,989	,,

Mr Rutherford, to-day the senior partner, thinking me harmless allowed me to rout about, and in the early letter-books of the firm I found much curious matter. What a field of history and anecdote awaiting exploration there must be lying on the dusty upper shelves of City merchants' offices. The partners wrote at great length, and mixed their business with a good deal of current gossip of the day. As duplication was unknown, each letter was laboriously copied by hand by a clerk, and one letter made to serve for a dozen different readers, the parts likely to interest being judiciously picked out. Thus, while the sea-captain's intelligence was of freights and sailings, and the agent on the plantations heard of the partners' approval of his management of the sugar fields and slaves, the customer in molasses had a bit of early news to stimulate his curiosity. A morsel of scandal

was judged not unwelcome, such as this of the conduct of the cavalry at Dettingen, "especially the Horse Bleus"—

"The Bleus at the beginning of the Battle, when ordered to draw up to the enemy, reined back their horses, and could not be forced to stir a step, and soon after retreated, but were found again behind the Infantry."

The following lines were also written upon the occasion—

"A Courier being ask'd, from the Army what news ?
Said, the Greys were too bold, too bashfull the Bleus."

And then a loyal word for the last of our Kings till George V., who saw war—

"His Majesty [George II.] has got great reputation by the conduct and courage he showed, and the success therein will be happy in its consequences. The whole line of Stewart (*sic*) had not altogether so much valour in all their actions as the King did in this one action, and that has made him so much the idol of the people that there is not one Tory left in the whole kingdom, but at the same time you know our country folks very well, and that the loss of a battle would lessen him again in their esteem."

A letter of 1743 brings Sir Robert Walpole before us, a splendid figure still, when, having governed England from Westminster like a Sovereign for an entire generation, the followers whom he had saturated with bribes deserted him, and he withdrew to find consolation amid

the magnificent surroundings he had made for himself at Houghton. Personally incorrupt, though the fountain of promiscuous corruption, he had been able, without expending a shilling that was not honestly his own, to lay out £200,000 on buildings and land, and another £40,000 on pictures. The correspondent had arrived from Barbadoes, after a pleasant passage, and "saw land that day six weeks." He tells—

"I lodged one night with Lord Orford [Sir Robert Walpole] at his retirement at Houghton, which is a noble House, and most magnificently furnished of anything I have ever seen. I saw by the inscription upon it, that the building was begun in 1735. . . . The Dogkennel is a good house, and might serve a Christian family to live in. The Gardens are equal to Everything Else, and separated from a Park, where there are above a thousand deer, by a deep Moat with a brick wall built in the middle and no higher than the surface of the ground, called a haugh-haw, which separation does not appear till you come near it, and upon the said Brick Wall are abundance of fine fruits, and for a vast space all round there are a vast variety of beauties, namely, Meadows, Pastures, Cornfields, Fishponds, and great and many plantations of Trees. There's not the appearance left of any individual thing which I saw there 22 years ago, except the parish church, and the whole looks like a new Creation and a second paradise.

"The owner of all these fine things appears contented and chearfull, and I did think his Situation happily changed in his decline of life, from the irksome Grandeur of the former part of it. He was, the day I saw him, which was his birthday, arrived at his sixty-seventh

year, and still preserves all the faculties of mind in full perfection."

And here is a tragedy to find among a City merchant's letter-books—

"Dean Swift has absolutely lost his Intellects. He had conveyed all his Estate to certain Trustees to be disposed of after his death for charitable uses, and they seeing the State he was fallen into and that he would squander away his fortune, gott the guardianship of him to prevent it, and now, I am told, his servants exhibit him for a show for Money and he sitts in a great chair in an odd dress and curses and swears incessantly. How vain is the greatest human genius, when this Man who laughed at the follies of all People is becoming a laughing Stock for all the fools in Ireland."

A curiosity of this old correspondence was that the merchant's year still began in April. Thus a letter of 28th March 1747 is immediately followed by one dated 3rd April 1748—a division of time which only the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Income-Tax Commissioners now keep alive.

These are a few of the associations of the house and its occupants. Its wealth of carving and age-browned panels recalls the earlier conditions of its world-wide trade, and it is pleasant to learn that there is a likelihood of No. 34 Great Tower Street being preserved, unchanged and intact, for at least another century. Those who explore the house will notice the original staircase, with

the characteristic twisted rail, leading to the uppermost floor and the flat roof, whence comes, as always from a height, an illusion of the City very much more cramped and smaller than it appears below.

VII

LONDON'S ROMAN BATHS

LONDON possesses two Roman baths, one built in the City's heart and the other in the rural surroundings of the Strand, of which it may be said—

One certainly is Roman, but is it a bath ?
The other certainly is a bath, but is it Roman ?

A mathematician might eliminate the possible sources of error, and state the result in these terms—

1 ROMAN—BATH

which has the advantage of stating only fact, but archæologists are not likely to be convinced by this method.

The Corporation of London, wider awake now than it was when so many remains of the former City were allowed to be destroyed, saved this Roman relic under the Coal Exchange in Lower Thames Street, by Billingsgate, and specially constructed for its preservation the chamber,

ROMAN BATH IN STRAND LANE, STRAND
Open to public inspection, Saturdays, 11 a.m. to noon

eleven feet below the road surface, in which it may to-day be seen. Unfortunately it could not save all that time and the Romans had left us. In excavating for the adjoining warehouses eastwards, further and more extensive remains were uncovered. These were duly charted, but City land is valuable and public funds so short that they could not be salved, and nothing of them survives—or, at least, nothing of them is accessible. This stroke of fate is to be deplored, for they would have given us the finest remains of a Roman building that the City preserves, always excepting the fragments of the great wall with which our first conquerors encircled the City.

The plan of the entire Roman building is shown in the accompanying drawing, for which I am indebted to Mr John Terry. The part preserved for inspection is that within the dotted lines. Let me forestall disappointment by saying that, descending to the bath, you must take your imagination with you, for it is difficult indeed to shift one's ideas into this place, and picture it as a Tadema canvas, with sunlight streaming into a stately building, and idle Roman patricians lolling about, or the beautiful maidens of Augusta, appropriately unattired, disporting themselves in the clear crystal water, amid marble surroundings. There may have been all that in London

drain
flue
A
H
B
K
C
D
E
G
M
drain

these many centuries ago, but there is not enough left to make the illusion. It seems at a glance more like a coal-hole, but that is because time and the civic authorities have not spared us more.

Few though the fragments are, with a little knowledge they become interesting. Assuming that this was a bath, let us take the plan and the shade of Vitruvius with us for a guide. A useful man Vitruvius; generations of posterity, to whom his great *De Architectura* is a closed and sealed book, has his shade accompanied upon inspections of surviving Roman baths in all parts of the world empire. Then it is not difficult to reconstruct the building. F is the Hypocaust, with several of the Pilæ not displaced and still showing. It is of the customary shallow depth, only 1 ft. 8 in. to the under-side of the floor of the Sudatorium (C), or vapour bath, above. In the south-east corner of this apartment are seen the remains of a recessed seat.

Through a door was a room (B) which may be taken to be the Caldarium, or warm bath, and right and left two chambers A and D, which should be, the former the Apoditerium, or waiting-room, and the latter an intermediate room before entering the Frigidarium (E). These apartments constitute the house so far as we are able to restore it. The extreme length of the Hypocaust

from one semi-circular end to the other was 35 ft. 6 in., which with the plan gives sufficient indication of the proportions of the whole. Red tesselated pavements found—one fragment is undisturbed—the tiled walls, and flues and drains indicate that it was a building of some importance in Roman London. An arched flue left in the eastern semi-circular wall of the Hypocaust, 1 ft. 6 in. high by 1 ft. 3 in. wide, probably indicated where the fire was lighted—the Præfurnium—and still showed traces after all these centuries of smoke having passed through it.

From this short description it will be seen that these Roman remains fit in very well with the plan of a bath, though whether it was a public bath, or one attached to the villa of a wealthy resident, cannot now be decided.

The non-technical public is apt to be misled by the use of the term Hypocaust, believing it synonomous with bath, which it is not. The Hypocaust was a common means of warming, not only baths, but Roman houses, the heat from the exterior furnace lighted outside the building being transmitted by subterranean flues and vertical shafts carried up through the walls. The Romans understood central heating in its most modern application perfectly—for there is nothing new under the sun. Thus it may be

that we have here a whole Roman dwelling-place, once habited by a public official or citizen of substance, and not merely a cleansing place, which to my mind seems likely.

The second Roman bath is in Strand Lane, on the river side of the Strand between the two churches that stand out in the mid-thoroughfare. This undoubtedly is a bath, for the spring water still flows into it, there are steps for the bather down into it, and it would not be at all difficult to drown in it. What other evidence can one want ?

It is in a curious vaulted chamber, very strongly built, giving ample space all round the bath, with a passage at the side, strongly arched, which suggests that this is a fragment of what was once a considerable building. A fair light penetrates through the one window. You stand shut out from the world and all its movement and noise, and altogether, with the actual presence of water, this is a much more satisfactory bath than its fellow in the City. It bears legends to which I do not necessarily subscribe, though they would be right enough could we be sure of any date. I believe the bath was not known publicly till about the year 1834, but that, of course, is no evidence against the authenticity of its reputed origin.

What has annoyed me on all occasions when I have visited there is that some person, well-intentioned no doubt, has covered over every trace of brick or tile or stone with cement rendering, so that it is quite impossible to tell, save through the eye of faith, of what age this bath may be. It is sunk below the surface level, and fed by a perpetual spring—one of many found in this ground falling sharply to the Thames. The white marble slabs which now form its foot-surface gives no guidance, for they were taken out of a great bath which was in the house of Elizabeth's favourite, the Earl of Essex, not far distant off the Strand, that bath having been demolished during the erection of new buildings so recently as 1893.

"There was an old Roman Bath in those days," wrote Dickens's David Copperfield, "at the bottom of one of the streets out of the Strand—it may be there still—in which I have had many a cold plunge." It is there still.

A visitor seventy years ago has described the bath as it then was. "The walls of the bath consisted, we found, of that peculiar flat and neat-looking aspect which certainly seemed to imply the impress of Roman hands, divided only by thin layers of stucco; and the pavement of a layer of similar brick, covered with stucco,

and resting upon a mass of stucco and rubble. The construction of the pavement is made visible by a deep hole at the end near the window, where the spring is continually flowing up; and in pursuing our inquiries among those persons best calculated to satisfy them, we were told by a gentleman connected with the management of the estate, who had a portion of the pavement purposely removed, that the rubble was of that peculiar character well known among architects as Roman. The bricks are $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches broad, and $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches thick." This construction is not unlike the Roman bath at Wroxeter, where the tile is but $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches thick, and measures 16 inches by 12. But I should have preferred the evidence of my own eyes.

A year before the War I took a party of the London and Middlesex Archæological Society to the old Roman Bath in the Strand, missing then the opportunity of a lifetime. It happened that builders had been there engaged on repairs; much of the modern cement at the bowed end of the bath had been chipped away, exposing—partly dry and partly under water—portions of the structure behind, and what certainly looked to me (from a dry distance) to be pieces of Roman tile or brick. The proper thing to have done was to have gone in to see, clothes, tortoise-

shell specs and all—no, I would have anchored the silk hat ashore—and so settle the matter. There was not more than four feet of water.

It was a chilly winter afternoon, the sun setting, and spring water is very cold. I was too much of a coward.

And now I never pass down the Strand by this lane without a shrug, thinking what one cold plunge might have done; how I would have floored the antiquaries (or they me), and there would have grown about my name the legend that this man proved against all opponents the authenticity of London's Roman Bath in the Strand—our real, still usable Roman Bath; with a statue, perhaps, of myself, in Roman toga, after the next widening of the Strand had made sufficient clearance for a site. And I was too much of a coward to take it!

VIII

WAPPING HIGH STREET

" Your Molly has never been false, she declares,
Since last time we parted at Wapping Old Stairs,
When I swore I still would continue the same,
And gave you the 'bacco box mark'd with my name.
When I passed a whole fortnight between decks with you,
Did I e'er give a kiss, Tom, to one of your crew ? "

NOTHING can be more significant of the change that has overtaken Wapping than the fact that people should ever have written songs about the place—and so many of them. " Wapping Old Stairs " was a show piece with our grandmothers for two generations or more, and now quaintly old-fashioned, still finds a place in every well-ordered musical album. The notes recall fading memories of dear old ladies in ringlets and oddly grotesque gowns who played the piece when they were themselves young, in times which seem so curiously remote from our own.

Wapping was vigorously alive when the melody and words were written, now fully a century ago.

The steamships and the great docks, the rail-

ways, the smoke, the jolt and rattle of donkey-engines and steel hawsers, all that gives this waterside district its present drab character, were yet to come. Wapping brought the salt taste, fresh from the open sea, right up to London's gates—it lies but ten minutes' walk from The Tower. The jolly young waterman—the song comes again tripping on the tongue at mention of the name—plying his wherry from the numerous boat-stairs, then carried all the passengers who did not pass by the few bridges that crossed the river. Stout East and West Indiamen, the monarchs of the sailing fleets, beat a way up with wind and tide to the anchorage at Blackwall, but the larger part of the shipping came within hail of Wapping.

Picture a stretch of open riverside, with no fewer than eight public stairs, and boats rowing up at all hours of the day and night, with the pleasant splash of oars in the water, depositing sailors ashore. The world-famous High Street straggled along the bank. Behind was a hive of town dwellings, threaded by narrow alleys, inexpressibly dirty; and on the Thames—"the silvery Thames," toned to brown but clearer than it is to-day—masts and tall hulls lay out at moorings on the tide, row upon row, far down the broad expanse of Limehouse Reach, with

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WAPPING OLD STAIRS

the breeze rattling the taut shrouds. That was Wapping in its hey-day, a bit of Portsmouth old town nestling against London. Old timber-built houses occupied the front, with steep gabled roofs, and wooden galleries—much favoured by old salts—giving a long view over the shipping down river, and ricketty steps descending to the bit of gravel beach left uncovered by the falling tide, in every condition of picturesque dilapidation and decay, dropped down at intervals without any ordered plan.

A few last survivals of the type may yet be seen, squeezed between the towering warehouses about Limehouse and Rotherhithe. Wapping was the busiest centre of the seafaring life of the port of London. Its nautical manners live in Dibdin's verse, and against all rivals I count him the historian of the place, for he alone has drawn for us the man—

"Bold Jack, the sailor, here I come,
Pray how d'ye like my nib,
My trowsers wide, my trampers rum,
My nab, and flowing jib ?
I sails the seas from end to end
And leads a joyous life ;
In ev'ry mess I finds a friend,
In ev'ry port a wife."

You may land at the Old Stairs still, and pace the High Street, over the stones where Spanking

Jack and Tom Tackle, and Ben Brace and other stout hearts home from the wars or the Eastern Seas came ashore to spend their wages and their prize-money, and cast saucy eyes at every passing Moll and Poll and Sally in the rollicking days of the old wooden walls—more rollicking, I feel certain, in fiction than ever they were in fact. The quaintly named "Town of Ramsgate" stands at the head of the Stairs, where it has stood, but little changed, these past two centuries or more for the refreshment of sailors.

Out of the neck of a tortuous alley you emerge into the street—it is "the Street" here, as if none other existed—and right and left extends what was Wapping. For the dead cities of the world are not so dead to their past as is Wapping dead to itself of little more than a century ago. Near at hand, by the Globe Wharf, the off-scourings of London's population gathered to witness the hangings of pirates and seamen at Execution Dock. With less certainty one may fix on the spot where "Landlady Meg of Wapping," whose charms have been sung in verse, kept her alehouse, open night and day. It needs no monstrous flight back over the years to fancy oneself jostling in the crush with all those jolly sea-dogs whom Dibdin's delightful imagination

has made so familiar. Dibdin, by the way, did not write "Wapping Old Stairs."

Wapping lies downstream close against the City of London's boundaries. You can almost shout from Wapping to the Lord Mayor. It is quite unknown to Londoners. No one thinks of going there. Moreover, it is absolutely unrecognizable. The one paved street runs beneath the sheer walls of huge warehouses which shut out all sight of the river, low-lying as though at the bottom of a deep cutting. Can this be the famous Wapping High Street? The name painted up alone tells you so. Wapping Wall is here, too, but in little more than name. The narrow road twists awkwardly around gasworks and stores and a few workmen's tenements.

All the colour has gone with the people. Few places have been swept so clean as Wapping. It has been undercut for the Thames Tunnel and the railway, dug out for the great London Docks, until now half the parish has a water surface. The church alone wears signs of age, and the graveyard with its many moss-covered tombs, wherein lie master mariners brought here to their last anchorage.

A generation ago, when the Tichborne case was ringing in every one's ears, and Arthur Orton had paid that visit to the parental butcher's

shop at Wapping which contributed so much to his undoing, it caught the public fancy to make pilgrimages there. The butcher's shop has now gone, like everything else. It stood by the Wapping entrance to London Docks, adjoining a shop where Lord Nelson was said to have bought his outfit when first he went to sea. People who came mildly wondered at what they saw. This angle of the riverside world below bridge was strange and unfamiliar. But the seven days' wonder passed, and Wapping was left again to the undistracted labours of the dockers and the stevedores and the steamship carriers.

The hamlet which Dibdin has so generously peopled is the only one of which any clear impression survives. It shouldered London, but formed no portion of the town. The distinction is important. Wapping in its eminence lived apart in its life and ways. A lawless quarter, it stood beyond the City's jurisdiction, and as Jack ashore acknowledged no master, it escaped even the little effective surveillance that was exercised over the town under the Georges. In aspect the place might have passed for a bit of old London before the Great Fire, much patched and repaired, with the wide river before it and London Bridge closing in the view upstream—not the present London Bridge, of course, but the long, low bridge

with so many stone piers, and the starlings rising out of the river bed, and the rapids rushing between, which was finished by King John, and was standing almost within memory of our grandfathers.

It had a glory peculiarly its own, this famous High Street, when the life was in it. The name was familiar wherever trade or war took British ships into the most distant seas, and stood as a symbol to sailors of riot and boisterous enjoyment, as the old wind-jambers threshed their way homewards. What the Hard has been to Portsmouth, the High Street of Wapping was to the port of London when the sailing fleets carried our world commerce.

With the ships dropping anchor, and homecoming sailors putting off for the steps, the longshoremen waiting about the head of the stairs, the Jews ready to cash the seamen's pay-notes at usurious interest, the women and the numerous other hangers-on of Jack ashore, animation was never wanting. The ferry to Rotherhithe and the watermen's wherries were constantly plying. Every tavern kept open door to welcome the mariner with wages in his pocket. From within came the shouts and sounds of revelry, the scraping of fiddles and the stamping of feet to the sailors' hornpipe, and the riot and licentiousness overflowed into the street.

Of the many landing-places, the deserted Old Stairs and the New Stairs, nearer the City, alone survive. And, more significant than all, you may tramp Wapping from end to end without recognizing a sailor man.

A single fact tells more of character than pages of description. Wapping High Street in the days of Nelson's wars possessed upwards of one hundred and forty ale-houses. One need say little more. In a recent perambulation I was not able to count ten. Together with these reeking drink-shops, inexpressible in their squalor and dirt, the natural home for every kind of abomination, were other houses of resort which one may deftly pass by without too curious inquiry. In the gloomy slum area at the back, the inner recesses of the hive, mostly dwelt the people who lived, quite literally, upon the sailor, and they formed the greater part of the population that was herded here.

Others there were who supplied, more or less honestly, the sailors' wants; and the shops of the mathematical instrument sellers, the ships' chandlers, the biscuit bakers, the tackle, block and sail makers, and the mast yards and rope-walks that helped to fill out the alley spaces—all swept indiscriminately away—gave to the place those picturesque and more pleasant associa-

tions with the seafaring life which now one has to go much farther east to find. Above the doors and across the alleys swung the most wonderful collection of nautical signs in the world. One wonders what has become of them all.

But Wapping streets and taverns, the shanties and the people, are nothing without the man for whom alone they existed—

" I sing of that life of delight beyond measure
That tars calmly lead on the boisterous main ;
Where toil is enjoyment, where trouble's all pleasure,
And where men lose their lives a sure fortune to gain ;
Where you fear no diseases but sickness and scurvy ;
Where the water stinks sweetly by way of a zest ;
Where you walk on your legs when you're not topsy turvy ;
And where, though you sleep soundly, you're never at rest.
Then push round the can—oh ! you have not a notion
Of sailors, their grog, and their sweethearts and wives.
Ah ! give me, my soul, the tight lads of the ocean,
Who, though they're so wretched, lead such happy lives.

" What of perils, that, always the same, are so various,
And though shot-holes and leaks leave wide open Death's doors ?
Devil a risk's in a battle, were't not so precarious ;
Storms are all gig and fun, but for breakers and shores ;
In short, a tar's life—you may say that I told it—
Who leaves quiet and peace, foreign countries to roam,

Is, of all other lives, I'll be bound to uphold it,
The best life in the world, next to staying at home.
Then push round the can, etc."

None of this is true, but there was no denying it. Dibdin mesmerized his own generation, and his songs have coloured the impressions of sea life down to this day. The damning evidence was always accessible, but with a thousand witnesses to the contrary his impetuous verse bore all before it.

Dibdin must often have paced the Wapping High Street, familiarizing himself with those nautical characters he portrayed. Should his shade chance to haunt this place you could never mistake him—in the blue coat, cut away to display the ample waistcoat beneath, black silk breeches and stockings, and hair fully dressed and profusely powdered in the fashion of the day. A big man, loose-limbed as a sailor is, with flushed and merry face, as if pleased with all the world and with himself. O'Keefe, the actor, himself a generous soul, tells of Dibdin, "His manner of coming on the stage was in happy style; he ran on sprightly, and with a laughing face, like a friend who enters hastily to impart to you some good news." The spice of a quarrelsome nature and some domestic peccadilloes one need not trouble about.

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WAPPING'S FAMOUS HIGH STREET
Ten minutes' walk below Tower Bridge

Dibdin's sailors are London types, cockneys born within sound of Bow bells. The European War has renewed our acquaintance with the qualities of the London fighting man. So far down the Thames the shipping has drifted to an unknown dockland that we forget that London is the greatest port as well as the greatest city in the world. Whence arose the popular idea that Dibdin drew his inspiration from Portsmouth is not plain. The songs themselves give no evidence of it, while, on the other hand, they contain many references to London. The town was always his headquarters; there he wrote his songs, and sang his own words to music of his own composition. Apart from the one fact that his brother Tom was captain of an Indiaman, there was nothing in his life or in the family tradition to associate Charles Dibdin with the sea. Born in Southampton in 1745, he was the son of a parish clerk. Tom Dibdin is immortalized in the beautiful lines of "Tom Bowling"—lines that are inscribed on the song-writer's own tomb in St Martin's Churchyard, Camden Town. But Tom, sailing in the *Hope*, West Indiaman, was captured by a French seventy-four, leaving Charles Dibdin, then a raw youngster, stranded and friendless in London, and after his liberation by the enemy he spent most of his remaining

years in the East, and so could have given but little aid to the sailors' song-writer.

"Blow High, Blow Low" is easily first of the sea lyrics. It was written in a gale of wind, on a thirteen hours' crossing from Calais. Dibdin had gone there to escape his creditors. The fury of a storm has never been so vividly expressed in so few lines—

"Blow high, blow low, let tempests tear
The mainmast by the board;
My heart with thoughts of thee, my dear,
And love, well stor'd,
Shall brave all danger, scorn all fear,
The roaring winds, the raging sea,
In hopes on shore
To be once more
Safe moor'd with thee.

"Aloft while mountains high we go,
The whistling winds that scud along,
And the surge roaring from below,
Shall my signal be
To think of thee,
And this shall be my song:
Blow high, blow low, etc.

"And on that night when all the crew
The mem'ry of their former lives,
O'er flowing cans of flip renew,
And drink their sweethearts and their wives,
I'll heave a sigh, and think of thee;
And as the ship rolls through the sea,
The burden of my song shall be:
Blow high, blow low, etc."

Dibdin claimed that his sea-songs sent more recruits into the King's Navy than all the Press Gangs, and perhaps there is little exaggeration in this. They were sung in the longroom on board every ship, at every seamen's carousal in port, and at taverns all over the country. The lilt of the lines, the vision of a life of adventure and pure joyousness which they created, swept the raw country lads off their feet. Dibdin purposely slurred over a vast deal. He avoided anything which would fog the bright colours of the picture that he forced the unthinking public to accept. The men are all stalwart hearts of oak, patriotic to the core, inflexible in duty, undaunted by peril. Mog and Poll and Sally—the sailors' women of Wapping High Street or the Portsmouth Hard—are all virtuous, faithful and kind, the seaman's true friends. In this ideal company he knows no exceptions. Ships and sea life have much altered. The nautical terms with which the songs are freely interlarded have passed out of use in our sailless vessels. Almost all has undergone change. Yet Dibdin's tars—Bill Bobstay, Jack Ratlin, Tom Tough, Dick Dock, William, and the rest—remain solid flesh and red blood, and they will live as long as ships traverse the ocean routes.

Many gifted song writers have pourtrayed

the freedom, the charm, the mystery, the resistless fury of the sea, but no other has given us the sailor—

" 'Twas one day at Wapping, his dangers o'erhauling,
Jack Junk cock'd his jemmy, and broach'd a full can,
While a posse of neighbours, of each diff'rent calling,
Cried—' Only but hear ! what a marvellous man ; '
' Avast ! ' cried out Jack, ' what's there marvellous in it ?
When our time's come, the stoutest of hearts must comply.'
Then like men do your duty ; we have all our minute,
And at sea, or ashore, we shall live till we die.
Hurra ! hurra ! hurra ! boys, let's live till we die.

" ' Why now, you, master Plumber, that marvels at billows,
I shall founder at sea, and you'll die in your bed ;
What of that ? some have sods, and some waves, for their pillows,
And 'tis likely enough we may both die of lead,
And as for the odds, all the diff'rence that's in it,
I shall pop off at once, and you'll lingering lie.'
Then like men, etc.

" And when Captain Death comes the reck'ning to settle,
You may clear ship for action as much as you like,
And behave like a man ; but he's such weight of metal,
At the very first broadside the bravest must strike.
And when you have said all you can, what's there in it ?
Who to scud 'gainst the storm but a lubber would try ?
Then like men, etc."

The charge sometimes brought against Dibdin of writing to order has nothing in it. He received

his pension in 1802, tardy recognition of such services as he had given to the British Navy in a most critical epoch. His best work was done, and he was fifty-seven. The truth no doubt was that his blood was stirred, like that of all others in those war times, and that he wrote with a strong sense of patriotic duty. Though he grumbled at the Government, good sterling love of his country illuminates every verse of his sea songs.

Some of these are purely hilarious. "Meg of Wapping" is an instance; the lines gallop along—

"'Twas Landlady Meg that made such rare flip—
Pull away, pull away, hearties!
At Wapping she liv'd, at the sign of the Ship,
Where tars meet in such jolly parties.
She'd shine at the play, and she'd jig at the ball,
All rigg'd out so gay and so topping;
For she married six husbands, and buried them all,
Pull away, pull away, pull away!
I say;
What d'ye think of my Meg of Wapping?"

Four verses which follow tell of the shortened careers of her six spouses. The first, Old Bluff, was cast away. Then blear-ey'd Ned—

"While the surgeon his limb was a lopping.
A nine-pounder came, and smack went his head,—
Pull away, pull away, pull away!
I say;
Rare news for my Meg of Wapping."

Groggy Sam lost his life when his ship blew up. After came—

"... bold Ben, who at danger would smile,
'Till his courage a crocodile stopping,
Made his breakfast on Ben on the banks of the Nile,—
Pull away, pull away, pull away;
I say;
What a fortunate Meg of Wapping."

Dick, the fifth husband, made a meal for savages; Jerry was killed in a fray he chanced "to pop in"; and "honest Tom Trip," the seventh, more fortunate than all, survived the much-married widow.

"For Meg, growing old, a fond dotart prov'd,
And must after a boy needs be hopping;
So she popp'd off—and Tom, with the girl that he lov'd—
Pull away, pull away, pull away!
I say;
Spent the shiners of Meg of Wapping."

Was it all a lie? That seems hard to credit.

I believe in the sailor, even as Dibdin pourtrayed him; for no one can read the plain records of those old sea battles at close quarters, when ships locked together fired broadsides into one another, and chain and grape-shot swept the decks, without realizing that it was the courage and endurance of the British tar that made the strength of Nelson's fleets, as of our steel-clad

fleets to-day. Those are the sterling qualities out of which Dibdin built his characters. He exaggerates the sailors' virtues to the point of making the men ridiculous. He shows them all philosophers. They preach too much. And that, after all, is the mere dressing. Strip it off, and there stands out the fine figure of the man.

The jovial-hearted sailor, reckless, improvident, careless of the little troubles which worry the landsman, engrossed when ashore with the pleasures of to-day without a thought of to-morrow, is a type which changed conditions have by no means effaced. But the joyousness of the sailor's lot when penned in the wooden ships, the unalloyed delight that he derived from his daily round—all that is false, and Dibdin knew it. The truth lies nearer in the demands made by the seamen at the Mutiny of the Nore, their revolt against the loathsome food, the exacting duties, the coarse brutality of their treatment, and also is disclosed in personal letters and memoirs of Nelson's officers, who, to their great credit, bore uncomplainingly hardships little less than those of the foremast hands. The King's sailors did not ask for the abolition of "the cat," but that at the end of a cruise they might have shore leave, and that the nation

whom they guarded should have a little more humanity towards them. One recalls Samuel Johnson's sour description of a seaman's life—"being in a ship is being in jail with the chance of being drowned."

And Wapping was not at all like Dibdin painted it.

It was the foulest, the most loathsome spot in all London—and there were many foul spots in London of the Georges. The sailor ashore, made brutish by his environment, did harm to no one but himself, but so much good cannot be said of the rest. The vilest characters of the town gathered at Wapping to prey upon the seamen whose stay on land was short, and with whom money was plentiful during the few days it was permitted to last. Into the drink-shops the sailors crowded as soon as the boats touched the stairs, and the men were quickly marked down for spoliation by the harpies who gathered about them.

The drink-shops, bad enough in all conscience, were not Wapping's worst places. The lanes and winding alleys back of "the Street" were a hotbed of every kind of crime. Men, armed with knives and loaded bludgeons, lurked in dark corners to attack and rob the seaman, already well plied with drink, who stumbled

about the gloomy recesses alone. Women acted as decoys to lure sailors from the taverns into hovels where they might be robbed at ease by male confederates, and from which they were afterwards flung, maimed and senseless, into the road. "Fences" abounded, and receiving shops wherein jewellery, much affected by sailors and easily stolen, was at once melted down, and other purloined goods were as quickly disposed of. Hardly a face was to be seen among this evil population that was not marked by a scar; black eyes and bound-up hands were the rule. Women, plied with fiery spirits and quickly quarrelsome, stripped to the waist and fought with fist and claw to make a holiday for sailors ashore, ringed about in the open street by a throng as debased as themselves.

In this fearful hell children grew up, thieves since their intelligence was sufficiently awakened to steal, to form the next generation of criminals, many lamed or blind by neglect. Life was short and little valued. When every conviction of felony, even for a shilling, meant death on the gallows, the meanest ruffians became desperate. Tyburn took its own toll; but larger was the toll claimed by the great graveyard of St George's-in-the-East of the sailors' women, inured to immorality from childhood, rotten with disease

and dead, many of them, before adult life with their more favoured sisters can be said to have begun. Night followed day to the soul's damnation without check in Wapping's evil life.

In times of war the Press Gang swept the High Street from end to end. Lying off Wapping was the hulk in which men lured into the military service of the East India Company were kept close prisoners till the next ship sailed out of the Thames for the East.

Wapping had another and questionable distinction. For centuries it was the place of execution under Admiralty jurisdiction for crimes committed on the high seas, the gallows being set upon the uncovered beach at low tide. It was an imposing cavalcade that came down from Newgate Gaol, no ordinary landsman's affair. The condemned rode in a cart, the executioners seated behind them. On their way they were preceded by the Marshal of the Admiralty in his carriage. The Deputy Marshal bore before him the Silver Oar. The two City Marshals followed on horseback, and numbers of marshalmen, sheriffs' officers and others acted as escort. By Tower Hill and Nightingale Lane they passed to Wapping High Street, and so into sight of the steaming, shouting crowd at Execution Dock, impatiently awaiting its amusement. Captain

Kidd was hanged there; it was an insult to a man of his mettle, with so many high crimes to his account, to hang him for having killed a common seaman on his own ship by banging him over the head with a bucket.

I sat the other day in the little recreation ground at Wapping that the London County Council has made, with fresh green turf and asphalt paths, alone, with only the hum about the near but invisible riverside for company.

Yes, Wapping is dead; as dead as any dead cities there may be that lie salted at the bottom of the Dead Sea.

IX

LONDON STONE

LONDON Stone in Cannon Street crops up suddenly in London history so late as the year 1450, when Jack Cade, at the head of a shouting rabble—

> " Rebellious hinds, the filth and scum of Kent,
> Mark'd for the gallows "—

forced a way into the City. Lydgate, just twenty years before Cade, in a poem speaks of a stone standing in Cannon Street, then called London Stone. The dates should act like an icepack to reduce the warmth with which some theories of its antiquity have been advocated.

Its Roman origin has passed into currency practically unquestioned. The late Sir Laurence Gomme so accepted London Stone, working hard till the last to establish his cherished belief that twentieth century London comes down to its present possessors with unbroken continuity in customs and government from the city colonized by the Romans. He held it to be a boundary stone. " Now London Stone (he remarks) has

Photo. by Emery Walker

LONDON STONE

In wall of St. Swithin's Church, Cannon Street

always been a remarkable centre of rites, ceremonies and traditions, which show it to have been held in reverence through the centuries. It stood on the western extremity of the first Roman London, which may perhaps point to it as one of the stone sides of the gateway which led to the Pomaerium " ; and in the name of the adjoining parish—Pomroy—he fancies there may be preserved the word for this sacred Roman institution.

Others have seen in London Stone the *milliarium*, the one central milestone marking London from which all the milestones raised upon the Roman roads through England registered their distances. These people point to its position in the centre of the longest diameter of the second and better known Roman London—the London bounded by the wall running by the line of Newgate, Cripplegate, Moorgate, Aldgate, and the rest, of which the original citadel formed only a part. The learned Camden, taking this view, believed London Stone to be " a miliary." Again quoting Sir Laurence Gomme: " If London Stone indicated to Roman Londoners of the second city a sacred point reminiscent of the earlier city its later history would be largely accounted for. Its topographical position is the first help to such an indication, and when we have added the undoubted sacred character attributed

to it throughout all later history, the conclusion will, I think, be justified that London Stone represents the sentiment of Roman Londoners for the early city and camp which was enclosed in Londinium."

Lacking Sir Laurence's great enthusiasm, I have failed to find in "all later history" that sacred character so postulated, or, indeed, in any of it; not for want of industry on my part, nor out of the natural combativeness of antiquaries for broken heads, but simply because it is not there. It may be heresy to suggest that London Stone is not Roman at all, and has had nothing whatever to do with the Roman city.

Let us go back to Shakespeare, and that short, boisterous scene in the *Second Part of King Henry VI., Act iv.*

London. Cannon Street.

Enter JACK CADE *and the rest, and strikes his staff on London Stone.*

CADE. Now is Mortimer lord of this city! And here, sitting upon London Stone, I charge and command that, of the city's cost, the pissing-conduit run nothing but claret wine this first year of our reign. And now henceforward it shall be treason for any one that calls me other than Lord Mortimer.

Shakespeare is not history, and no one out of a play-house would cite Shakespeare as an

historian, but the point is that the dramatist in this passage closely follows Holinshed, except that the chronicler represents Jack Cade as striking London Stone with his sword, not with his staff. Holinshed was a London citizen, a diligent recorder of events in his own city, and be London Stone Roman or not, Cade sitting astride of it, and Lydgate's mention just before, are the earliest knowledge we have of this treasured City relic. Let me meet expert criticism by conceding at once that the name certainly is two and a half centuries older. It was a bigger stone originally than is the fragment of it to-day preserved in the outer wall of St Swithin's Church in Cannon Street, where every passer-by may see it. Old John Stow, who wrote in Queen Elizabeth's last years, says of it: "On the south side of this high street, near unto the channel, is pitched upright a great stone, called London Stone, fixed in the ground very deep, fastened with bars of iron, and otherwise so strongly set, that if carts do run against it through negligence the wheels be broken and the stone itself unshaken. The cause why this stone was set there, the time when, or other memory is none." He thought there was some legend of the early Christians connected with it.

Everything, it will be noticed, points to London

Stone being very old, and there is significance in the act of Jack Cade, striking it with his sword and crying, " Now is Mortimer lord of this city ! " as if performing a customary ceremony on taking possession of the City.

The Guildhall archives go back to the Conqueror's charter to London, and in them are earlier references than these to London Stone—the name, the place. A moot question is, how far can we distinguish these from the actual stone relic ? There was Henry FitzAlwin de Londone Stane, the City's first Mayor—and he was important. He became Mayor in A.D. 1189,[1] and for twenty-three years thereafter, till his death, the citizens acknowledged him their Mayor. The founding of the Mayoralty is shrouded in mystery, for not until 1214, twenty-five years after FitzAlwin's first election, did King John give to the Londoners a charter to elect their Mayor. Till FitzAlwin the City had been ruled by portreeve, or sheriff, or justiciar (there is much dispute as to the title) appointed by the King. It is inconceivable that the citizens should for this long period have usurped the Royal authority, and John's gift can only have been an acceptance or confirmation of a state

[1] An influential section of modern historians believe the Mayoralty to have been founded in 1191.

of things already existing—perhaps based upon some charter which has been lost.

Of Henry FitzAlwin of London Stone, although so important a personage as London's first Mayor, we know very little, unfortunately. FitzAlwin was the son of Alwin, and of Alwin we know nothing. What made his position so strong that year after year for twenty-three years he, and no one else, should have been the accepted representative of the citizens? Such devotion must have been the reward for good services given. It is most unlikely, at that time, that he was merely a merchant or tradesman; we probably see in him a great burgher, owning wide lands, powerful, wealthy, able to maintain the citizens' interests against covetous and unscrupulous kings, and it may be presumed that he played a leading part in wresting from the Crown the first acknowledgment of the right of the citizens to govern their own affairs. His name has come down to us as Henry FitzAlwin of London Stone.

Often it is the little things that should be obvious, and are so obvious that they are quite overlooked, that when examined give a valuable clue in some historical puzzle. Has it ever occurred to you that there is no stone in London? It has to be brought in from considerable distances—Kent provides the nearest source.

" Stane " in its original meaning is a stone building, and the word survives in the City in St Mary Staining and Allhallows Staining, stone-built churches at a period when most of the churches were fashioned of wooden logs. To this day the " steining " of a well is its stone lining. In FitzAlwin's time in the twelfth century—King Richard Cœur de Lion was long abroad at the Crusades—there were no roads capable of supporting burdens over considerable distances, but there was the Thames, capable in all weathers of bearing stone in boats into the City for the wealthy builder choosing that enduring material. Lesser men built of timber, then and long afterwards. The mediæval city substantially throughout was composed of timber-framed houses, so that when in King Stephen's reign fire started among them, burning amidst the wood and thatched roofs, the flames spread from St Paul's eastward, consuming the bridge and the houses and churches and almost the entire city. When John Allin died in 1272—sixty years after FitzAlwin—he left by will " his estate in a stone house in Fletestrete " to Robert and Richard, his sons. A stone house was so uncommon that mere mention of it was sufficient without more detailed description.

Henry FitzAlwin of London Stone, London's

wealthy and powerful first Mayor, built for himself a stone house—that is how it may be read. It would be a significant thing among London's poor wooden hovels. In 1240 there was a John de Londoneston, who, by the way, murdered his wife by stabbing her with a sword, otherwise we might never have heard of him.

It requires no tautly stretched imagination to conceive that Henry FitzAlwin's stone-built house, the home of the Mayor, the most powerful man in London, the centre of its government, serving the uses of both Guildhall and Mansion House, became known as "London Stone." Just in this way St Mary's stone-built church became known as St Mary Staining, and Allhallows Church—of which the mediæval tower still stands behind Mincing Lane—as Allhallows Staining. Of course, it does not necessarily follow. John de Fletbrigge did not reside amidst the open, wind-swept timbers of Fleet Bridge, nor did that potent Mayor, Raynald de Conduit, find a wet domicile inside the water conduit. They lived close by those well-known landmarks of Old London, where those who wanted them might find them, as FitzAlwin, I frankly admit, may have lived close by an aged and already well-worn stone.

"A desperate fellow, this," I fancy someone

saying of me, "he is no respecter of our most cherished traditions." It will be seen that I await attack, for what is here said is rank heresy; and I recall words written by the late Charles Morley. "I must confess a warm affection (said he) for those ardent souls who devote their wisdom and energy to the exploration of the past. A brick or a stone, a piece of flint or a lump of mortar, will provide them with material. Out of it they strike the spark of truth, and it is only the foolish who laugh at their zeal, and deem so much study unprofitable and childish. I, for one, have always found them the happiest of mortals, and archæology capable of yielding greater and truer pleasure, possibly, than any form of recreation or pursuit which appeals to the meditative mind." True, but the salt of life, the spice of it, my old friend misses—the little quarrels which archæologists share with other men, and which make the dry bones laid on the exhibits table kick again. "The late Charles Morley," I wrote—ah, me! how often one writes those words, "the late."

London Stone, much worn and battered, is hidden in a pierced stone casing that almost encloses it, and is still further concealed by close ironwork, which has got into a deplorable state of rust. A coat of paint, even after war-

time, ought to be spared for it. The grime of London has accumulated so thickly upon the Stone that it is nearly impossible to tell which is the historic relic and which the mere casing. Some years ago members of the London and Middlesex Archæological Society were fortunate enough to be present when London Stone was uncovered. It then proved to be a piece of oolitic building stone.

All that has gone before leads up to this. Is there any need to assume, as so many have done, that London Stone is a relic of the Roman city? There is not the smallest rag of evidence associating it with Londinium. All is vain imagining. Not a solitary mention of the Stone itself occurs until far down in the era of mediæval London. May it not be merely an honoured fragment of FitzAlwin's stone house? Associations grew around it. A large stone—once—perhaps a foundation-stone, bedded deep, as Stow saw it, it remained on the ground after the house above it had disappeared, and the citizens had built their noble Guildhall. It continued through the centuries to mark the site, and as a relic of the home of London's first Mayor, the first Guildhall and Mansion House, the beginnings of independent self-government for the City, I can understand the citizens sparing it and treasuring it.

If that be the true story of London Stone, then, too, I can understand Jack Cade's act of braggadocio and the words that accompanied it. "Now is Mortimer lord of this city!" The victorious rebel, astride the historical remains of London's first seat of self-government, considered that the stone he thus appropriated to himself secured to him the lordship of the City. What significance there can have been in his striking with his sword an old Roman stone I cannot imagine. What should Cade and his letterless rabble know of Roman London?—or the fifteenth-century citizens, for that matter?

In Bovey Tracy, the little town on Dartmoor's wilds, stands a stone cross, and it used to be the custom for the Mayor, on Mayor's day, to ride round the cross and strike it with his staff on taking possession of his office. No suggestion of the Romans here.

In Elizabeth's reign London Stone seems to have had some legal associations. A character in *Pasquill and Marfarius*, 1589, remarks—

"Set up this bill at London Stone. Let it be doone sollemly with drom and trumpet and looke you advance my cullour, on the top of the steeple right over against it."

And again—

"If it please them these dark winter nights to stikke uppe their papers uppon London Stone."

London Stone was moved from its original site on the south side of Cannon Street, where the railway station now stands, and fixed in its present place of security in St Swithin's Church wall in the year 1798. If it be necessary to take from its reputed age a thousand years, and to see in it a building stone of the first Mayoral mansion and Guildhall, I do not think it is thereby the less honoured, but rather more. I am not asserting this as an ascertained fact.

It is put up for a cock-shy, to be knocked over by the first person who shall discover some other John, or Alan, or Simon "de Londone Stane" living in the lifetime of our first Mayor; or will identify elsewhere the site of FitzAlwin's house—which, by the way, some have found at Salters Hall. Meanwhile, as a suggested origin of London Stone it seems worth considering.

X

THE BONES OF MEN-KAU-RA

IDLY the people go by, for the Egyptian rooms of the British Museum are never without visitors, attracted there in large part, no doubt, by that morbid curiosity in death and its impenetrable mystery which is an inherited sense with most of us. Few stay to give more than a glance at these bones, lying out on a tray, toned to a bright yellow buff by the process by which they have been preserved by the embalmers, or at the broken coffin lid, with its double row of meaningless hieroglyphics.

Meaningless?—yes, but not to those who know. They tell of man's fears and aspirations long ages back towards the dawn. This is almost the oldest piece of writing in the world that has come down to us. Puzzle out the hieroglyphics with the aid of some student in Egyptology, and you will read this—

"Osiris, King of the North and South, Men-kau-Ra, living for ever. Born of Heaven, conceived by Nut, thou comest [of the race of the god] Seb.

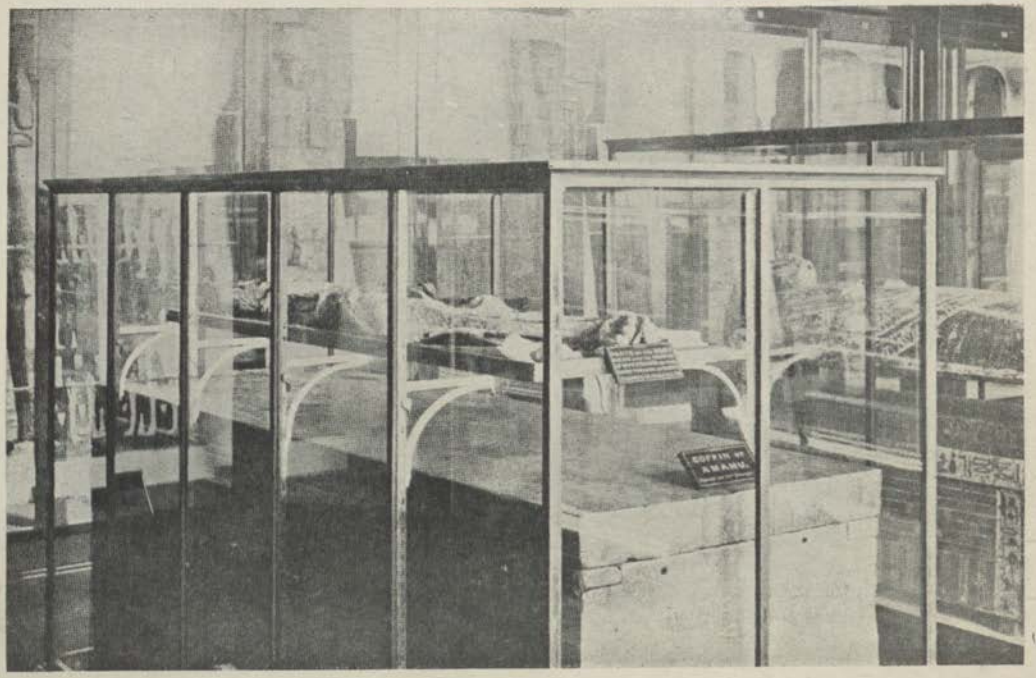
"Thy mother Nut she grants that thou shalt be a god. Never more shalt thou have enemies, King of the North and South O Men-kau-Ra, living for ever."

This then was a king, a Pharaoh of the Pyramids, ruler over Egypt. Khufu and Khafra had gone before him, and had built in stone higher and more massively, but his tomb stands beside theirs above the sands at Gizeh, by the Nile, and is still accounted third of the most wonderful tombs in the world. It will last so long as the world lasts. The divine ruler had willed that his remains should rest amidst that vast heap of masonry, while through the appointed cycles of years his soul should wander in the unknown. And here he lies, in Bloomsbury, the least considered of this company of the dead; for all around the ritual of death is presented in its most gorgeous form, with plates of beaten gold, and bright paintings, and little ushabti gods of a religion which perished with these people thousands of years ago, and mummy cases fashioned to preserve the form and features that Nature herself is so quick to destroy.

The wayfarer who lingers here stands almost at the beginning of things, so far as human records are concerned. Babylon in its rise and fall, Greece, Rome, substantially all that is known of the human race save what is gleaned from the

message of chipped flints and scratchings by prehistoric man on reindeer and ox bones, and old human skulls in the Drift—all have had their place and time on the world's stage and have disappeared since these were the bones of a living King, and this pathetic inscription, with its longings for immortality, was deep cut on the wooden lid of his coffin nearly sixty centuries ago.

That modern Greek Herodotus stood at the pyramid tomb of Men-kau-Ra—call him classic if you will, but nearly four thousand years had then come and gone between Herodotus and this Egyptian King. The traveller learnt much, but it was not history. A web of tradition had grown about the personality of this remote and shadowy ruler: that his reign was just and beneficent, and that he was beloved by his people—a belief likely to have had its origin in the simple fact that in the building of his pyramid tomb his oppression had been less burdensome than that of those larger builders, his predecessors. Khufu (whom the Greeks called Cheops) erected the grandest monument that ever man had raised to his vanity and ambition. Khafra (Chephron) built but little smaller. The Third Pyramid of Men-kau-Ra (Mycerinus) is but one-tenth the mass of the Great Pyramid—so vast



THE BONES OF MEN-KAU-RA
In the Egyptian Galleries, British Museum

and yet so small in the majestic conception of these monuments that, with a ground surface of little more than two acres, it might rise from and fill a London square.

The secret of the Pyramids has been well kept. No doubt prisoners, taken in thousands into captivity in the wars which Egypt interminably waged, were largely employed as slaves in the task of building; but is there not another and simpler explanation of all the huge public works carried out in Egypt? It is found in the annual rise of the Nile. The period of the inundation stopped all labour, throwing the entire populations along the river—and the river was Egypt—idle and free to do what the Royal master willed.

Herodotus learnt more of this Pharaoh Men-kau-Ra—that he opened the temples, and permitted the people, worn down by labour by his father Khafra to the last extremity, to return to their employments and to sacrifices; that he made the most just decisions of all their kings. That he had a daughter, an only child, concerning whom the traveller tells two tales, one affecting in its simplicity, the other obscene. The Pharaoh, extremely afflicted by her death, and desiring her burial in the most sumptuous manner, caused a hollow wooden image of a kneeling cow to be made, the image of the sacred goddess Hathor.

This he had covered with gold, the orb of the Sun imitated in gold being set between the horns, and into the body of the cow he placed the mummy of his daughter. When dying she had entreated her father to permit her to see the sun once every year. And once each year, at a great religious festival, the cow was brought from its richly furnished chamber at Sais out into the sunshine—that rich Egyptian sunshine, the rays emanating from the Giver of Life, which gleamed from every stone building and carpeted the city with velvet black shadows of pylons and temples. In an ante-chamber were placed wooden statues of the King's concubines, twenty in number, all formed naked.

That was the story told by the priests of Sais concerning their charge. The other Herodotus learnt from the people, that the girl was betrayed and had strangled herself through grief, and that her mother cut off the hands of the servants who had betrayed her, and their images were made in like manner to show the mutilation. The cow he saw at Sais, and the twenty wooden images, but his quick eye noticed that the hands had fallen off by age and decay, and even then were lying at the feet, so he made little of the tale.

This, too, Herodotus learnt from the priests; that an oracle reached the King from a sacred city,

imparting that he had no more than six full years to live, and he should die in the seventh. Men-kau-Ra ventured a reproachful message to the god, complaining that his father and uncle, who had shut up the temples and paid no regard to the gods, and moreover, had oppressed their subjects, had lived long, together for one hundred and six years. Why was it that he must die so soon—he who had worshipped the gods and dutifully had made sacrifices to them? The oracle replied that it was needful that Egypt should be afflicted for one hundred and thirty years. The two who were kings before him understood this, but he did not. When the Pharaoh thus realized that sentence was pronounced against him he ordered a great number of lamps to be raised, and having lighted them, whenever night came on he drank and enjoyed himself, never ceasing day or night roving about the marshes and palm groves, whenever he could hear of places most suited for pleasure. To this artifice he resorted in order that by turning the nights into days he might have twelve years of life instead of the six allotted.

The coffin, bones, and huge sarcophagus of the King were found in 1837 by Colonel Howard Vyse, an English officer, when exploring under a firman granted by the Pasha. They were in the tomb-

chambers cut sixty feet deep in the living rock from which the Third Pyramid rises. Robbers had been there before him; indeed, there is an Arab record of 1226 A.D., describing how the pyramid had been attacked by treasure seekers, who laboured at their task with axes for six months. They at length forced an entrance, and in the sarcophagus, after they had broken off the lid, saw "the decayed, rotten remains of a man, but no treasure by his side, except some golden tablets inscribed with characters of a language which no man could understand." Each robber's share of these tablets amounted to 100 dinars—about the value of £50.

When Colonel Howard Vyse entered the pyramid the basalt sarcophagus had not been displaced. The mummy had been lifted out, and taken for examination into an outer chamber, still within the tomb. There it had been rifled. The rolls of bandages, yard upon yard of almost interminable length, the robbers had unwound in order that they might ascertain if jewels or gold plates were concealed among the swathings. If so, they have disappeared—centuries ago. Fragments of the linen told of the sacrilegious act. In the candle light, among the debris that littered the stone floor, was found intact only the broken coffin and the skeleton, substantially

complete save for the head. To-day, the visitor to the British Museum will notice that the skull is missing.

Upon this one fact, not easily, I agree, to be explained, an ingenious story has been woven. These are no bones of a king. They tell of a grim tragedy in the dark, dank stone chambers and passages of the pyramid. Robbers, breaking into the tomb, had quarrelled over the treasure they found there. One they had left behind, slain. In fear lest others coming after might identify him, and so bring home the crime to its authors, they had carried away the head. This theory, however, is completely disposed of by the fact that the bones of the legs and feet when found were partially enveloped in coarse mummy cloth of a yellow colour, to which a small quantity of resinous substance and gum adhered.

Even there the misadventures that have befallen the relics of this Egyptian monarch did not end. With infinite pains the heavy sarcophagus—it weighed three tons—was removed into the outer air, through passages so foul that the flame of candles dwindled and went out, and the air was poisonous to the workers. It was shipped from Alexandria for London in the autumn of the following year. A storm arose, in which the vessel was lost off the iron-bound

coast near Gibraltar. The ship, her crew, and the precious burden in their charge have never since been heard of (some wreckage was washed up) and only these bones and the coffin lid survive till the sea shall give up the secrets it holds in its bed.

The sarcophagus is lost, but we know from the hieroglyphics so laboriously cut into the stone of a hundred others, from inscriptions carved in the passages of funeral chambers and pen writings on the native papyri, amid what kind of pictures and texts to the gods Men-kau-Ra lay there awaiting the new life. The ritual of the dead, changing but little, was among the oldest of Egypt's possessions. In it we may read the aspirations, the haunting fears, the hope of immortality which this early Pharaoh shared. Elsewhere in London, in the Sir John Soane's Museum in Lincoln's Inn Fields, is the massive sarcophagus of Seti I., father of that Pharaoh who was the Oppressor of the Israelites. Through the texts cut in his stone chamber the divine ruler, struck down by Death, appeals to the everlasting gods[1]—

"O thou goddess Nut, support thou me, for I am thy son. Destroy thou the defects of my immobility, together with those who produce

[1] The text here given is that of Dr Wallis Budge.

them. Raise thou me up! I am thy son. Set thou free him whose heart is at rest from that which maketh it to be still. O Nut, lift thou me up. I am thy son. Do away from me that which maketh me to be without motion."

The great goddess of heaven, queen of the gods, answers the prayer: "This is my son Osiris, the King, the Lord of the North and South, the son of Ra, proceeding from his body, who loveth him. I have endowed him with a soul, I have endowed him with a spirit, and I have given him power in the body of his mother Tefnut, I who was never born. I have come. I have united myself to Osiris the King, the lord of the North and South, the Son of Ra, the Lord of Crowns, with life, stability and power. He shall not die. I am NUT of the mighty heart, and I took up my being in the body of my mother Tefnut in my name of Nut; over my mother none hath gained the mastery. I have filled every place with my beneficence, and I have led captive the whole earth; I have led captive the South and the North, and I have gathered together the things which are into my arms to vivify Osiris, the King, the Lord of the North and South, the Son of Ra, proceeding from his body, who loveth Seker, the Lord of Crowns, the Governor of the joyful heart. His soul shall live for ever!"

The god SEB speaks: "This is my son who loveth me. I have given unto him purity upon earth and glory in heaven, him the Osiris, the King."

And the company of the gods takes up the triumphant chant, god calling to god. HAPI: "I am Hapi. I have come that I may be among those who protect thee. I bind together for thee thy head, and thy members, smiting down for thee thine enemies beneath thee, and I give thee thy head, O Osiris, King, Son of Ra." QEBHSENNUF: "I am thy son. I have come that I may be among those who protect thee. I gather together for thee thy bones and I piece together for thee thy limbs. I bring unto thee thy heart, and I set it upon its seat in thy body. I make to flourish for thee thy house after thee, O thou who livest for ever!" ANPU: "I am Anpu, who dwell in the funeral chamber. Mother Isis shall come down, and shall bring unto me swathings for the Osiris, the King."

So from the echoing chambers of death rings down the ages the message of man's immortality.

Figures of gods and goddesses were above and below him. Protective texts with magical power were about him on all sides. Thus arrayed for death, the great King believed for a certainty in his appointed future—that his soul would pass

through the magic tunnel opening in the lofty and unscalable mountains that compassed the flat earth of the Egyptians, out into the Other World wherein the souls of men were tried, and thence, towed in its funeral boat along the sacred river, would emerge into the Radiance beyond, where he should dwell with Ra among the blest.

Is this the coffin and are these the actual bones of the Pharaoh Men-kau-Ra who ruled in Egypt so many thousands of years ago? The greatest of our scholars believe that they are, but on the first point there is not universal agreement. A suggestion has been made that the coffin lid is a pious restoration of the rulers of a later dynasty, this being based mainly upon certain peculiarities in the hieroglyphics, too technical for discussion here. Men-kau-Ra, curiously, had two pyramid tombs. Urkhuu has told us in an inscription that he was a priest of Men-kau-Ra, and keeper of a place belonging to the pyramid Her—identified as the Third Pyramid above the sands at Gizeh. Debehen, a high official of this king, records an inscription of the Men-kau-Ra pyramid Neter—a small pyramid at Abu Roash, showing conspicuously on the highest hill of the western cliffs. At Abu Roash the King's funeral statue was found, but not his bones; at Gizeh bones, but not his funeral statue. What does this

mean? These things are among the Egyptian mysteries.

And that greater mystery still, the mystery of life and death, that, too, is unsolved. Much we know of the curious beliefs of the Egyptian in the composite nature of his being, his spiritual body, his heart, his soul, his double, his shadow, the intangible shining casing which encompassed him, but nowhere do the texts tell of a belief that his corruptible body would rise again. Yet that such a conviction was held we feel from the extraordinary care taken to preserve the mummy, and the strength with which this Pharaoh built his enduring pyramid tomb, which still is accounted one of the world's wonders.

The cycles of years go by, the bones do not stir. To-day they lie in prosaic Bloomsbury, far away from his own land, and a British Governor stands behind his throne by the Nile, ruler of the Kingdoms of the North and South. But human nature does not change. The dread of oblivion, man's helpless longing for immortality, which are so strong with us to-day, were just the same sixty centuries ago when the priests of Egypt inscribed upon this coffin lid—

"Never more shalt thou have enemies, King of the North and South, O Men-kau-Ra, living for ever!"

COFFIN-LID OF MEN-KAU-RA
In the Egyptian Galleries, British Museum

XI

THE BAGA DE SECRETIS

THREE locks of cunning workmanship, each one different, the shot bolts holding fast should the possessor of a single key attempt alone to open the jaws.

Three keys, deeply cut in varying patterns, one held in the keeping of the Lord Chief Justice, the second in that of the Attorney-General, and the third by the Master of the Crown Office.

Three high officers of State, acting together, each with his key in lock, might open the Bag of Secrets, but none others, nor one of them alone.

Bluebeard's cupboard was not guarded with such care. It could disclose a story less tragical than this of the Great Baga—less a thousand times! Perhaps one ought not to wonder that with such precautions the Crown kept inviolate against prying eyes the records which affected the King in his most intimate and domestic relations, the frailties of Queens, the treason of subjects, the course of justice which too often

was injustice when the fountain itself was dishonourable.

Far back in our history these dim and stained parchments go, to the reign of King Edward IV. They are strangely intermixed, telling much of treasons and attainders, affecting the King's Throne more than his personal relation, till Henry VIII.'s much troubled life sent to the Baga de Secretis the piled documents so full of human sadness, with their questions of guilt or innocence, so monstrous—inconceivable, it seems—that still we are left in doubt ; sometimes the doubt whether we can accept the word of man or woman, though they themselves by their plea say they are guilty of this thing charged, and, so saying, suffer. Anne Boleyn keeps this company, a tragical figure, asserting her innocence ; Katherine Howard ; later, Lady Jane Grey. Here, too, figures Sir Walter Raleigh, a great patriot and ill-starred adventurer, beheaded at Westminster ; Fisher and More, prisoners in The Tower together, sufferers for the same faith and sharing the same fate ; Sir Thomas Wyatt, rebel against Queen Mary ; the handsome favourite, Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, rebel against Elizabeth, members of the proud ducal house of Norfolk, and statesmen from Edward Plantagenet, Earl of Warwick. The names in hundreds, even thousands, form

almost an epitome of England's history, but some you miss, like Monmouth, executed upon attainder without trial; and, too, there is nothing of old Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat, the last man to suffer, in George II.'s time, decapitation upon Tower Hill.

All the trials recorded in these papers are those of subjects for crimes against the King. One King was placed on trial for crime against his subjects, but of Charles I. the Baga de Secretis contains nothing; the crowned State could not acknowledge the competence of that Court sitting in Westminster Hall to give the record inclusion here.

Long ago the great leathern Baga itself disappeared, swollen by its contents, no doubt, till they reached such proportions that no ox-hide could hold them. In our own age, when the Baga was explored, it consisted of a closet in which this collection was kept separate from other documents of the King's Bench, still under the three keys, held by the same three officers of State. Pouches, or small bags, were the receptacles of many of the ancient parchments, which generally were in good condition as to soundness, though crushed and crumpled in consequence of the mode in which they had been stowed. They ranged in shelves, row upon row, in the secret closet.

"The old order changeth, yielding place to the new"—the older order that had produced these tragical happenings. The records deal with a long dead past.

History, enthroned in judicial calm, sits in judgment upon these men and women, free from those influences and prejudices and fears which distracted judgment in their own day, searching only for truth. Loss, not public gain, results from concealment. All need for secrecy has gone; the locked jaws of the Baga de Secretis are opened—who can be harmed?—and to-day its contents are distributed in their proper series and time amongst the other documents of the Public Record Office in Chancery Lane, accessible—these papers guarded by our Kings with such jealous care—to any student who fills out the required slip for the attendant.

It was for centuries believed that the documents of the trial of Anne Boleyn had been destroyed. The trial was secret, conducted by a few chosen instruments who should do a brutish King's brutal behests; the public had not knowledge by which to question the judicial act; the victim was sacrificed. So the story had grown, weaving around Anne Boleyn pity indeed—pity which none can withhold—and making her martyr, not quite saint. Yet still not satisfying;

still leaving doubt ; still with that heart-searching question unanswered, was she this, or libertine, and worse ? "Sweet Anne Boleyn," the gentle Queen of a tragic epoch, laughing herself at that "lyttel neck" which next morning was to be severed by the Calais headsman's sword, was she this, or a brazen, corrupted—let us in pity leave out the word ! The Baga de Secretis revealed the documents, neither destroyed by designing hands nor lost, but preserved with meticulous care, each order and writ and bill. Nothing is missing. One recalls the use Froude made of them, and how one's beliefs toppled over—beliefs influenced in large part by that letter of infinite pathos which she wrote to Henry VIII., and her protestations of innocence. The evidence on oath we have not got. It satisfied the jurors of the different counties in which it was collected. The indictment based on their return sets out the place, the date, the personalities in respect of each act charged, indicating only too plainly the whole revolting story. Mark Smeton, the Court musician accused, pleaded guilty, and being of ignoble birth died at the gibbet. The others, of noble blood, suffered by the axe, and at the end did not protest innocence.

And what was the Court which joined in collusion with Henry VIII. in this act of un-

speakable infamy in putting to death a discarded Queen ?—that is, if Anne be held innocent and the guilt be that of Henry, guilt more red, more shameful a thousand times even than hers. A packed, carefully selected, and corrupt tribunal ? Let us see. The attendant at the Public Record Office in Chancery Lane will bring you the documents, still in the original white leather pouch, drawn together at the mouth with a leathern thong, in which they have been always kept, and thereon you may read the names. The trial of the Queen and of Lord Rochford, her brother, took place in The Tower, the 15th May 1536. There were the two English Dukes, of Norfolk—the veteran who had won his spurs at Flodden Field—and Suffolk. The one English Marquis, of Exeter. The Earls of Arundel, Oxford, Northumberland (the Queen's early lover) Westmorland, Derby, Worcester, Rutland, Sussex, and Huntingdon—all those in the peerage save four. Lords Audeley, De la Ware, Montague, Morley, Dacre, Cobham, Maltravers, Powis, Mounteagle, Clinton, Sandys, Windsor, Wentworth, Burgh and Mordaunt. Twenty-seven in all; "men hitherto of unblemished honour—the noblest blood in the realm."

Lord Wiltshire, one of the four absent Earls, was not called upon to give judgment upon his

daughter and son, but he sat upon the Commission and acquiesced in the finding which condemned the four commoners accused of adultery with the Queen. That Commission consisted besides of Lord Audeley, the Lord Chancellor of England; the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk; the Earls of Oxford, Westmorland and Sussex; Lord Sandys; Thomas Cromwell; Sir William Fitzwilliam, Lord High Admiral—often called "the Nelson of the sixteenth century"; Sir William Paulet, Lord Treasurer, and all the nine Judges of the Courts of Westminster. Had ever other commoners such a Court to try their cause? Thirty-two Knights and gentlemen were the grand jurors who returned true bills on the sworn evidence, and their names in the counties stood not less high.

Were *all these* so craven, so despicable, so lacking in human soul that for fear of Henry's displeasure they returned a finding which they knew to be false, fearful to do right in the belief that the King desired a wrong; they accepted concocted evidence knowing its worthlessness? Was there not one honest man among them? They had the evidence, which we have not; they answered to their names individually when called upon for their verdict; and in the two trials there is *not one* dissentient voice. Can anybody

conceive that Henry, arbitrary as were his methods, could alone have suborned the entire House of Peers, the full Judicial Bench, the ruling class without whom government was impossible, the Knights and gentlemen of the counties, and not find among them one witness to the truth who should speak out ?

These men who found the guilt of Anne Boleyn were the flower of England, of its blood, its chivalry, its learning, its character. If the tribunals appointed do not satisfy, where should others stronger have been found ? The Kingdom could not have produced their like. The Baga de Secretis, by disclosing the constitution of the Courts and the jurors, has solved an historic doubt. Either the evidence was such as to satisfy reasonable men, or Englishmen at this time had sunk into a morass of infamy and impotency of which we had believed our country clean. They were the Englishmen of the Reformation. Call us Huns or what you will if we are descendants of forefathers who shared with Henry VIII. the guilt of this cowardly crime. Let us bury our pride of race under the disgrace. To me it is incredible. If consolation lie in that fact, let us admit that error is always possible with all Parliaments, all Judges, with the largest numbers; but this trial and judgment

were honest. Against the revealed fact stands a legend, and the legend must go.

The records of another Queen's wrong fill in all fifty-three membranes in the Great Baga —Katherine Howard. A plump little person, radiant with that immeasurable gift of youth (she was but twenty-two), and pleasing she must have been to Henry's eye. Almost we forget her admitted frailties in the remembrance of that weird scene by candle-light in the gloomy Tower, the night before her execution. "She desired that the block on which she was to be beheaded might be brought to her, that she might learn how she was to place herself. This was done, and she made the experiment," wrote the Ambassador Chappuys. And so prepared, on a February morning, she went out into the sunrise of her last day, for the execution had been fixed for seven o'clock.

These other parchments at my elbow, separated in time by but a few years, are the papers of the trial of a third Queen—the Lady Jane Grey, the pitiful Queen of a nine days' reign. The charge against her is of high treason, and specifically that she signed various writings "Jane the Queene," against her allegiance. The Commission is addressed in the first instance to Thomas Whyte, Mayor of the City of London, other

names following, and the Precept to the Constable of The Tower, commanding him to bring her to Guildhall for trial, is signed "By me Thomas Whyte," and afterwards, "T. Norfolk" —the Duke of Norfolk, Earl Marshal of England. It is the acknowledgment of the Lord Mayor's precedence in the City, as in all cases where the trial was at Guildhall. She came on foot—why this unnecessary humiliation, one wonders?—and so returned. Cranmer and Guilford Dudley were with her, and with her pleaded guilty. "Judgment against the Lady Jane Grey, that she be burnt alive on Tower Hill or beheaded, as the Queen shall please." Oh! the horror of those times of butchery that could admit such a sentence!

I have said that the Baga de Secretis contains nothing of the trial of Charles I., but packed into it are the papers of the Regicides. Listen to the legal phraseology when a King dies violently—

"They [John Lisle and forty-seven others] proposed and consulted to murder the said King, and took upon themselves authority and power to put the said King to death. In execution of which traitorous design, viz. 30 January, in the parish of St Martin-in-the-Fields, they, together with a certain man, whose name is unknown to the jurors, having a visor upon his face and being clad in a frock, assaulted the same King; and the said unknown man, with an axe which he held in both his hands, struck the said King upon his neck, and divided his head from his body."

Afterwards William Hewlett was hurried to execution as the headsman, but his fate leaves unsolved the mysterious identity of the masked man on the scaffold raised outside the Banquetting House at Whitehall. Colder words than those cited could not be used for the most common crime.

It is with the toll of death that the Great Baga has been stuffed. Rare indeed is it to light upon an acquittal here. I find a man "otherwise John Johnston," a figure swollen with a great crime which still we recall each year.

Do you know John Johnson?

A complete stranger he seems. It is Guy Fawkes who alone fills the bill of Gunpowder Plot as arch-conspirator and desperado, with a name ringing and sounding down the centuries louder than ever Johnson would have done. I could not bring myself to light squibs and Catherine wheels to celebrate Johnson. It was the name that Fawkes gave when, bound hand and foot and under strong guard, he was brought into King James's presence in the royal bedchamber at Whitehall at one o'clock on the morning of his arrest, when the Privy Council was hastily assembled there, and he would say nothing save—with a wry smile—that his purpose was "to blow the Scots back to Scotland again!"

Fawkes's crushed indictment, of portentous length, has been tumbled into the Baga, and in it I read that Thomas Wyntour, Guy Fawkes otherwise Johnson, Keys, Robert Wyntour, Graunte, Rookewood and Bates were charged that they conspired and attempted "to blow up the King, Queen, Prince Henry, as well as the Knights, Citizens and Burgesses in Parliament assembled with gunpowder"; and I am left more than ever with puzzling wonder why Gunpowder Plot was not unmasked earlier. This apart from the fact that the knowledge was in the keeping of thirteen conspirators—auspicious number!

On the 11th Dec. 1604 these men began to dig "with great labour a mine under the Parliament House, even to the middle of the wall of the said Parliament House, such foundation being of the thickness of three yards, with the intention of placing a large quantity of gunpowder therein, for the purpose of carrying their treasonable intentions into effect." Finding the job tough, they hired through Percy, a fellow conspirator, a neighbouring house which had the advantage of a cellar going right under the House of Lords, and on 20th March next "did remove 20 barrels of gunpowder from the house of Percy into the said cellar." Then on the 31st July,

fearing that their explosive had become damp, they brought into the cellar ten more barrels of powder.

No suspicion had been aroused. Further, the plotters on the 20th September following "brought into the cellar four hogsheads filled with gunpowder, and also various iron bars and stones to place upon the same, and placed them thereon, and in order that the same might not be seen covered them with faggots." What was the sleepy Westminster watch doing? Months were passing—eleven months in all—in which digging was going on, barrels and hogsheads of gunpowder and missiles for the explosion were being rolled in from the street, till thirty-four powder barrels in all were stored, and no one in authority was a penny the wiser. The 4th November came, eve of the Parliament's meeting, and that night Fawkes was found *in flagrante delicto* in the cellar, watching beside the barrels with touchwood and matches about him. His signature to the confession extorted from him when on the rack you may see in the Public Record Office, the trembling, broken lines testifying that the poor wretch had been so nerve-shattered by his torture that he could not grasp the pen.

Now we make amends for the lack of caution shown when Gunpowder Plot was hatching, and

though three centuries have passed since the peril, still each time that Parliament meets for a new session the Beefeaters conduct their search for powder barrels in the vaults below the Parliament House.

A curious crime of which the Baga contains the whole story is that by Edward Squyer, a yeoman of London, in his attempt to poison Queen Elizabeth. Squyer had attached himself to Philip of Spain when he was preparing an Armada for invasion of England, and, attempting the life of great Elizabeth, this man brought back with him from Seville "a poisonous confection, contained in a double bladder, to the intention that he should smere the pommel of the Queen's saddle therewith when the Queen was about to ride, in order that she, putting her hand on the pommel, might be poisoned." He actually obtained admittance to the courtyard where the Queen's riding-horse was awaiting her, and rubbed some of the poison on the pommel of the saddle, exclaiming loudly at the same time, "God save the Queen!" for the purpose of better concealing his treason, but his clumsiness betrayed him. Judgment as against all traitors.

Timothy Penchard forged a likeness of Elizabeth's seal to counterfeit writs of the Queen's Bench, and this was his savage sentence:

that he should be put in the pillory upon two successive market days in Cheapside, and on the first day should have one ear nailed to the pillory, and on the second day his other ear nailed to the pillory, in such manner that he should by his own proper motion be compelled to tear away his two ears from the wood.

Elizabeth had a short way with vagabondage. It was charged against Rowland and Thomas Gabriel, Lawrence Bannester and Christopher Jackson, on indictment found at Aylesbury, that they did keep company with four persons, but one of whom—Deago—bears a foreign name, vulgarly called and calling themselves Egyptians, and counterfeited, transformed and altered themselves in dress, language and behaviour to such vagabonds called Egyptians, contrary to statute. " Judgment that they are to be hanged." Why this petty felony should figure among the historic trials in the Baga de Secretis I do not know, but these and many other names of men of mean condition stand on equality with the ill-fated Dukes of Buckingham and Suffolk, with Surrey and Somerset, Essex and Cobham, in the State calendar of crime.

XII

LONDON'S LOST KING

LOST, the statue of a king—lost, that is, to London this past century and a half, but not to the country of its creation. If travel leads your steps north, you will find in the beautiful grounds of Newby Hall, near Ripon, Yorks, raised in front of the mansion, the historical but forgotten statue of King Charles II. trampling on the prostrate Protector Oliver. Originally it stood where to-day is the Mansion House. It was the one architectural adornment of the old Stocks Market, the King, astride a pawing horse, being mounted on a high pedestal, but little honoured, I fear, by the fishwives, the vegetable and herb sellers, and the butchers who, till the middle eighteenth century, kept his company, and made this central spot in the City noisy with their cries.

The Stocks Market has gone, stalls, name and all. Long since the Lord Mayor's stocks have disappeared, wherein many a vagrom man has been held fast by the legs. St Christopher-

Davey & Sons, Harrogate

KING CHARLES II TRAMPLING UPON OLIVER CROMWELL

A London Statue now at Newby Hall, Ripon

le-Stocks church no longer stands. The entire parish, church and churchyard have been swallowed up in the Bank of England. The passer-by occasionally gets a glimpse through frowning portals of the pretty garden within the Bank, bright in summer with the gorgeous colouring of flowers, amidst which a fountain plays. That was the churchyard. After the building over of the ground the interment of one Jenkins, a Bank clerk, was allowed there. He stood 7 feet 6 inches high, and his burial took place within the bank in order to defeat the body-snatchers, who might be covetous for so rich a prize.

Sir Robert Vyner, "the Prince of Goldsmiths," was the donor of the Stocks Market statue, an episode in his picturesque career—Baronet, Alderman, Sheriff, Lord Mayor, and much more. A genial soul, addicted to good living, he was a familiar figure in Restoration days. Pepys, who loved bright company, kept an account with him, knew him well, and often in the *Diary* mentions his activities in the King's interests. For Vyner possessed money and Charles did not, and there was the bond that linked the two. Goldsmith and banker, he was, indeed, the chief financier of his day, a man with whom Charles, in his many and devious shifts for money, could

not do without. He gave Charles his Crown—literally, for the State jewels having been sold or pawned by Charles I. and the Parliament to provide funds for the opposing armies, Sir Robert Vyner advanced £32,000 to furnish a new set of regalia. Charles ruined him, leaving him when, by an arbitrary act, the King closed the Exchequer in January, 1672, an unsatisfied creditor for £416,000. Vyner shouldered his burden and struggled along to eventual bankruptcy, protected by Royal command forbidding his clients to sue him, and an annual payment of interest promised but long deferred; and in his broad-mindedness he seems to have borne the King no malice. He is best remembered by an anecdote told of a City feast in his mayoralty, whereat the King, stealing away to his coach in Guildhall Yard, was seized by the hand by his host, who cried with an oath, "Sire, you shall stay and take t'other bottle." Charles, ready in wit, replied with the line of an old song—

"He that is drunk is as great as a King,"

and the two jovial monarchs returned to the table to finish the carouse.

The Great Fire of London in 1666 swept the full length of Lombard Street on its second day. Vyner's fine house there, the typical mansion of

a rich City merchant, stood in a pleasant garden, where now is a branch Post Office, and it burnt with the rest, but his wealth, being largely in bonds and securities, was easily removed while the flames were still threatening. The King sent an order to Windsor Castle that Vyner's securities, moneys and jewels should be safe lodged there, and appointed also a place for him in order that his labours for the Crown should continue undisturbed. The City churches destroyed in the Great Fire included St Mary Woolchurchhawe, and a finer and larger Stocks Market being afterwards determined upon, the site of the church and graveyard were thrown into it.

What more befitting so central a position than a statue raised to the greatness of Charles II. ? So thought Sir Robert, with whom loyalty was the very life blood, when surely the most curious combination of circumstances that has ever occurred placed such a statue within his reach. The story has run with a ripple of laughter. It chanced that John Sobeisky, King of Poland, having slaughtered a vast number of Turks, and so saved Vienna, his Ambassador in England ordered an equestrian statue of his master commemorative of the victory. Sobeisky, engrossed with larger affairs, did not send his Ambassador

the money with which to pay the sculptor, and pending a settlement of this vital matter, the statue lay boxed up on Tower Wharf, below London Bridge, awaiting exportation. That was Vyner's opportunity, and he was prompt to seize it. The sculptor, forgotten but meritorious, put vigour into his work, representing Sobeisky in warrior's dress trampling upon a helpless Turk. The goldsmith purchased the statue,[1] and disregarding the incongruities of costume, had the head of the Polish King replaced by that of Charles II., and the features of the Turk lying prostrate under his horse's feet altered to those of Oliver Cromwell. Thus manœuvred, the statue arose on this spot in honour of the Sovereign! It was dedicated on the anniversary of the King's birthday in 1672; Walpole says that Latham carved the head of King Charles. There is not the least doubt about the story, which the Oriental attire and headdress of the betrampled Cromwell, as still to be seen at Newby Hall, fully bear out.

Naturally the lampooners made busy. One wrote these lines some years after the erection of the statue:

[1] There is another version of the origin of the statue, that Vyner first heard of it from his agent at Leghorn, that he acquired it for a mere song, and shipped it from the Continent to Tower Wharf. I do not know which is true.

"Could Robert Vyner have foreseen
The glorious triumph of his master,
The Wool Church statue gold had been,
Which now is made of alabaster.
But wise men think had it been wood,
'Twere for a bankrupt King too good.
Those that the fabric well consider
Do of it diversely discourse,
Some pass their censure on the rider,
Others their judgment on the horse;
Most say the steed's a goodly thing,
But all agree 'tis a lewd King."

Andrew Marvell, when Member of Parliament for Hull, spent his satire upon the ill-judged statue, in lines which passed from hand to hand, but attained print only posthumously. In order to understand them, remember that the equestrian figure was set up after the general ruin which attended the closing of the Exchequer—

"So Sir Robert advanced the King's statue in token
Of a Broker defeated and Lombard Street broken.

Some thought it a mighty and generous Deed,
Obliging the citty with a King on a steed,
When with Honour he might from his word have gone back;
He that waits for a Calme is absolv'd by a Wrack.

By all it appears, from the first to the last,
To be a Revenge, and a Malice forecast,
Upon the King's Birth-day to set up a thing
That shows him a Monkey more like than a King.

When each one that passes finds fault with the Horse,
Yet all do assure that the King is much worse;

And some by its likeness Sir Robert suspect
That he did for the King his own statue erect.

But with all his faults pray give us our King
As ever you hope in December for Spring.
For tho' the whole World cannot shew such another,
We had better have him than his bigotted Brother."

Not less biting in their allusions are verses on "A Dialogue Between two Horses." The steeds bearing the figures of Charles I. at Charing Cross, and Charles II. at the Stocks Market have joined company at night, their riders having dismounted, the father to visit Archbishop Laud, and the son to seek more questionable associates. An anonymous writer of the next century gave in satirical form "The Last Dying Speech and Confession of the Horse at Stocks Market"—

"Ye whimsical people of London's fair town,
Who one year put up what the next year you pull down;
Full sixty-one years have I stood in this place,
And never till now met with any disgrace.
What affront to crowned heads could you offer more bare,
Than to pull down a King to make room for a Mayor?

The great Sobeiski, on horse with long tail
I first represented when set up for sale;
A Turk, as you see, was placed under my feet,
To prove o'er the Sultan my triumph complete.

When the King was restored, you then, in a trice,
Called me Charles the Second, and, by way of device,
Said the old whiskered Turk had Oliver's face—
Though, you know, to be conquered, he ne'er felt the disgrace.

As the market is moved, I'm obliged to retreat ;
I could stay there no longer with nothing to eat ;
Now the herbs and the greens are all carried away,
I must trot unto those who will find me in hay."

The City bore with the statue, a constant shaft of opprobrium and ridicule, for two-thirds of a century, when in 1738 the closing of the Stocks Market and clearance of the ground for building the Mansion House left it on hand. What to do with it was a problem the civic fathers could not solve. They had then had more experience of the Stuarts, in no way enlarging the popularity of that dynasty. A Hanoverian sat on the British Throne. Rider and horse were laid aside for several years, out of sight in a builder's shed, and when memory of them had faded, the Common Council, in the year 1779, presented the statue to Robert Vyner, a descendant of the loyal Lord Mayor. It was set up by him at Gautby Park, Lincolnshire, and its last migration was in 1883 to Newby Hall, the Yorkshire seat of the present head of the Vyner family, where to-day it stands. Such, in brief, is the story of the Stocks Market statue, and one wonders if another Royal effigy has ever had such adventures.

XIII

THE FIRES OF SMITHFIELD

"The noble army of Martyrs, praise Thee."

THE buildings of a great work of mercy, St Bartholomew's Hospital, enclose Smithfield on one side, fronting the dread place whereon the fires were lighted, and upon a wall you may read a tablet which tells simply that "Within a few feet of this spot John Rogers, John Bradford, John Philpot and other Servants of God suffered death by fire for the Faith of Christ, in the years 1555, 1556, 1557." Three martyrs only are thus commemorated, with others unnamed. It is curious that there is no list accessible of those who suffered for faith at Smithfield—no one has been at the trouble of collecting the names. Most, but not all, may be recovered by research in Foxe's huge *Acts and Monuments*, known to the living generation by its many abridgements, but unfamiliar in its awesome mass.

Smithfield has much changed. The blue garb

of honour of the wounded soldier from the wars mixes with the civilian drab seen in the Hospital squares, the men sitting out to greet the sunshine. The open space before was London's cattle-market, lasting into Victorian times. The pens and byres covering the ground, the horse dealers and drovers and figures of bucolic life which the market brought together—all have gone. To-day the drays occasionally lumbering by to the underground stores and ice-chambers bring only carcases. The whole picture of animation dissolved when the live stock came no more into the City. There is one thing surviving which was there when the faggots crackled and burnt and human life went out in agony, looking down upon the altered scene—the archway of Great St Bartholomew's, which is all that the despoilers of the Reformation have spared of the immense nave and western front of that majestic church. An old timber-framed house has been built around and above it, now after many years restored to its original picturesqueness.

That is a sad little archway, for through it have passed many victims to the stake and the flame.

Seventy years ago there was a square space of dark coloured cobbled paving, now obliterated, which had a tradition, set before this gateway

but edged a little out into the open Smithfield—which once was London's "smooth field." In the month of March, 1849, excavations necessary for a new sewer were made at this spot. Three feet below the surface the workmen laid open a mass of unhewn stones, blackened as if by fire. Ashes covered them. There were, too, human bones, charred and partially consumed. That was proof sufficient that this was the site of the Smithfield burnings. The unhewn stones were the supports of the stake. Some of these bones of martyrs people carried away as relics.

Forty-three martyrs, men and women, suffered death by fire here in the Marian persecutions. Let us not forget that there were others, Protestant and Catholic, before. The horror of Queen Mary's reign has seared deeply the national conscience, and with thought of it rousing one's blood to passionate protest at such atrocity, these others one is apt to overlook. The times were cruel, and men were cruel, not knowing tolerance, one faith or the other, and with judgment so strangely warped, with belief each man in his creed so immutably fixed, that Christian sent Christian to torment and death believing that thereby a godly work was done, worshipping one and the same God. It is a strange and terrible chapter in human error.

London News Agency

SMITHFIELD: SITE OF THE MARTYRS' STAKE

In roadway marked with white cross

"That was the hand that wrote it, therefore it shall suffer first punishment," said Cranmer in the fire at Oxford of his recantation, extending his right arm into the flame, "and never stirred nor cried." The pathos of that scene will always make its appeal;[1] and who remembers that Cranmer had himself sent Friar Forest and Joan Bocher to the flames in Smithfield? The goodly Latimer preached the sermon at Forest's burning, desiring, he wrote to Cromwell, "that my stage stood near unto Forest, for I would endeavour myself so to content the people, that therewith I might also convert Forest, God so helping, or, rather, altogether working." Pity for an erring man one may perhaps find in the letter, but of horror at the contemplated act nothing.

"I will die," Forest gallantly answered when Latimer turned to ask him if he would live or die. "Do your worst upon me. Seven years ago you durst not, for your life, have preached such words as these; and now, if an angel from heaven should come down and teach me any other doctrine than that which I learnt as a child, I would not believe him. Take me; cut

[1] I cannot forbear the pleasure of recalling the fine lines of Jeremy Collier on Cranmer's death: "He burnt to appearance without motion or pain; he seemed to repel the force of the fire and to overlook the torture, by strength of thought."

me to pieces, joint from joint. Burn—hang—do what you will—I will be true henceforth to my faith." And therewith, in chains, he was swung into the fire.

King Henry VIII. martyred Protestants and Catholics, and once, late in his persecuting career, Smithfield witnessed the dreadful spectacle of three Protestants—Robert Barnes, Thomas Garret, and William Jerome—burnt at the stake as "abominable and detestable heretics," and suffering beside them three Romish priests, Fetherstone, Abel and Powel, hanged and quartered as traitors. The last were said to have spoken in favour of the Pope. These men's fate should teach this terrible lesson: the execution of traitors was to imply no indulgence of heresy; the punishment of heretics should give no hope to men disloyal to their King and country. Foxe could allow but grudging admission of the Catholic priests to his martyrology, "being neither good martyrs to God nor good subjects to the King," he says of them in a marginal note.

The Marian persecutions struck at their outset a noble victim. John Rogers had preached at Paul's Cross three days after Queen Mary's arrival in London. There he boldly set forth the Reformed doctrines. He never preached

again. Stripped of his benefices, he was cast into Newgate; and in the prison chapel on his last day, the 4th February 1555, he was degraded from the priesthood by having his canonical dress torn piece-meal from him, and was immediately after sent out to the stake at Smithfield.

Rogers had been converted by personal intimacy with William Tyndale, and he it was who had prepared Tyndale's unfinished Old Testament in English for the press, though he did not actually translate himself. He was Prebendary of St Paul's, and vicar of St Sepulchre's, outside Newgate.

On his way he passed by his own church, met there by his wife and eleven children, the youngest in arms. The sorrowful sight did not shake his resolution. They joined the procession. "The people in Smithfield were not afraid to make him many exclamations to strengthen his courage. Even his children assisted at it, comforting him in such manner that it seemed as if he had been led to a wedding," wrote Count Noailles, the French Ambassador. So to his Master went the first of the Marian martyrs.

Again, on the 30th May, the fires were prepared. There came, through sympathizers crowding about them, John Cardmaker, Chancellor of

Wells and also a preacher at St Paul's; and with him John Warne, an unlettered cloth-worker. Warne was offered the Queen's pardon if he would recant. Straight he went to the stake. Cardmaker dallied in conversation with the Sheriffs. "The people assembled in Smithfield," says Foxe, "were in a marvellous dump and sadness, thinking that Cardmaker would recant at the burning of Warne. At length, coming towards the stake, he kneeled down in prayer, then rose up, put off his clothes unto his shirt, and went with bold courage to the stake and kissed it sweetly; he took Warne by the hand and comforted him heartily; and so gave himself to be also bound most gladly.

"The people, seeing this so suddenly done, contrary to their fearful expectation, as men delivered out of a great doubt, cried for joy (with so great a shout as hath not lightly been heard a greater) saying, 'God be praised! The Lord strengthen thee, Cardmaker; the Lord Jesus receive thy spirit!'" This continued till the executioner put fire to them. "And they both passed," adds Foxe, in trumpet phrases, "through the fire to the blessed rest and peace among God's holy saints and martyrs, to enjoy the crown of triumph and victory prepared for the elect soldiers and warriors of Christ Jesus in his

blessed kingdom. To whom be glory and majesty for ever. Amen!"

The year had other victims, and none of gentler grace than John Bradford, divine. Rumour had spread that he was to be burnt at dawn of a July morning. In darkness a vast concourse of people assembled. It was not until nine that he was brought to the stake, "a great company of weaponed men to conduct him thither as the like was seen at no man's burning, for in every corner of Smithfield there were some, besides those who stood about the stake." Mary's councillors had fears that the populace would be stung to resistance. Bradford spoke to the people; the Sheriff brusquely ordered that his hands be tied if he would not keep silence. John Leaf, a young man, was his fellow martyr. Bradford turned to him, saying, "Be of good comfort, brother, for we shall have a merry supper with the Lord this night." So with eyes upcast he passed.

A new year opened with the bitter spectacle in Smithfield of seven persons burning together, the 27th January 1556. Thomas Whittle, an expelled priest, had gone abroad preaching to whoever would hear. Bartlet Green was a young man of family who had been converted to the Reformed Church when at Oxford by the

lectures of Peter Martyr, and studied law in the Temple, a man "meek, humble, discreet, and of most gentle behaviour"—it is Foxe's description. Thomas Browne, when at Bonner's palace at Fulham required to attend Mass in chapel, went into the warren and there knelt among the trees. John Tudson and John Wart were simple artificers; Isobel Foster, the wife of a mechanic. Joan Warne, a young maid, attending in prison her parents, both of whom had gloried at their death in the flame, had herself come under suspicion for her faith. Together the seven went to the fire.

In April six others, in one fire; in May three women—their names Katherine Hut, a widow, Elizabeth Thackvel, and Joan Horns, a maid, all three defiant. Joan Horns would yield nothing either to fair promises or to terror. "And so," says Foxe indignantly, "the holy virgin and martyr, committed to the shambles of the secular sword, was offered up with her fellows a burnt sacrifice to the Lord, *in odorem bonæ fragrantiæ*" ("in the savour of a sweet and pleasant smell").

A fourth, Margaret Ellis, intended for a like fate, found escape by death in Newgate.

They were people of small standing, with them some divines, but the persecution hesitated to strike down powerful victims; doing its

work in public, yet always fearful of consequences; shrinking from rousing in England that fierce, ungovernable resentment deep in our character which would have overwhelmed in bloodshed ten times aggravated the whole cursed error. This thing was foreign to our soil, in which it could never root. The pageantry with which the Holy Inquisition had familiarized the Continent, the exultant triumph, the banners, the public holiday, the hoarse shout, the fête of Death—Smithfield saw none of these. Its fires lacked the awful splendours of the Spanish Auto-da-Fe, the devilment and concomitant horrors of the procession of tortured and broken victims to the stake. Dark deeds were done darkly, not with the insolence of pride.

The third year the persecution increased, like rolling thunder gathering volume, terrible, ominous. Smithfield, on 12th April 1557, witnessed three other men and two women burnt; thereafter three men; then John Rough, a minister, with Margaret Dearing, a woman of his congregation; again three men. Why continue? In pity, let us cut out the awful story. It has been written in sorrow and in shame, and the remembrance can never be forgotten. Full fed as were the fires of Smithfield, they did not suffice; they had their like all over the

country. On one occasion, at Stratford-by-Bow, on London's outskirts, thirteen martyrs perished in one fire, eleven men in groups of three chained to separate stakes, and the remaining two men together at a fourth stake, and two women *left loose* in the ring of flame formed by lighted faggots piled high.

I hasten to the closing scene.

Seven martyrs die together, the 27th June 1558. They were part of a congregation taken while assembled for prayer in the fields at Islington, a company of forty men and women. Roger Holland, John Holiday, Henry Pond, Reinald Eastland, Robert Southam, Matthew Ricarby, John Floyd—these were chosen for Smithfield; others elsewhere. The temper of the populace was evident. Mary's officers, an armed guard being with them, read a proclamation forbidding any spectator under pain of imprisonment to speak a word to the approaching martyrs. They replied to the Queen's menaces by crowding about them, affectionately embraced them, and brought them in their arms to the place of suffering.

Master Bentham (afterwards Elizabeth's Bishop of Lichfield), nothing daunted, spoke out with a loud voice, "We know that they are the people of God, and therefore we cannot

choose but wish well to them, and say, 'God strengthen them! Almighty God, for Christ's sake strengthen them!'"

The multitude shouted in reply, "Amen, Amen!"

"Lord, bless Thy people," said Holland, as fire was set to the faggots and the flames rose. They were the last words recorded spoken from the stake at Smithfield, for soon afterwards Mary was released by death. The most hideous reign in England had ended.

Elizabeth burnt two heretics and made many martyrs besides, and the Protestant bigot, James I., sent a man—Bartholomew Legate—to burn for heresy in Smithfield; but with the passing of Mary the dread chapter of persecution by fire for faith may be considered closed. That was three and a half centuries ago. The tablet on the Hospital wall, so inconsequential and seen by few, in fact almost concealed by its own railing, I suppose must be accepted as characteristically English. We are indeed a great nation in our neglect. The City does not honour its own great dead or outstanding events in its long history, and the two or three monumental bronzes in its streets are raised to statesmen and kings of small importance. But Smithfield still has wide spaces, and I should like to see on this sanctified spot a little shrine raised, a stone

screen with a fald-stool or two, to which any who have been deeply moved by the glorious spirit tried here in death might if they wished enter, and there pray. I cannot but think that to our many visitors from the distant Dominions the continued neglect of Smithfield must bring a shock of surprise.

A monumental brass in the church of Rayne, in Essex, to the memory of Elizabeth Blencowe of Thoby Priory, records that she was the sixth in lineal descent from William Barber, who narrowly escaped the flames of persecution under Queen Mary, having been brought to the stake at Smithfield, and his life saved by arrival of intelligence of the Queen's death.

A belief commonly held that fire was the chosen instrument of religious persecution because of its extreme torment has no basis. The choice had a deeper significance. *Ecclesia non novit sanguinem,* of course. But the idea underlying all was that of annihilation, soul and body—the end! The utter annihilation of the heretic's soul was accepted on the teaching of the Church uppermost at the time; that of the body should be visible to the assembled spectators as the corporal man was reduced before their eyes, and finally in ashes was blown into nothingness at the sport of the winds.

It is a befitting act to record the names of the Smithfield Martyrs in this place, and some people there will be, I feel sure, who will value this list. Those whose family names are the same cannot but feel honoured by this association.

MARTYRS BY FIRE AT SMITHFIELD.

Where names are bracketed the victims perished together in one fire.

JAMES I

Bartholomew Legate, "the Aryan"

QUEEN MARY

John Rogers
Thomas Tomkins
John Cardmaker, John Warne
John Bradford, John Leaf
John Philpot

Robert Drakes
William Tyms
Robert Spurge
Thomas Spurge
John Canel
George Ambrose

John Hollingdale
William Sparrow
Richard Gibson
John Rough, Margaret Dearing
Cuthbert Sympson
Hugh Fox
John Devenish

Thomas Whittle
Bartlet Green
John Tudson
John Wart, Thomas Browne, Isabel Foster, Joan Warne

Katherine Hut
Joan Horns
Elizabeth Thackvel

Thomas Losely
Henry Ramsey
Thomas Thirtel
Margaret Hide
Agnes Stanley

Henry Pond
Reinald Eastland
Robert Southam
Matthew Ricarby
John Floyd
John Holiday
Roger Holland

EDWARD VI

Joan Bocher, Anabaptist

HENRY VIII

John Tewkesbury
James Bainham
John Frith
Andrew Hewet
Collins
Robert Barnes
William Jerome
Thomas Garret
Annie Askew
John Lacels
John Adams
Nicholas Belenian
Friar Forest
John Nicholson, *alias* Lambert
Rogers (of Norfolk)
Style

HENRY VII

Joan Boughton

HENRY VI

Four priests

HENRY IV

William Sawtree
Thomas Badby

XIV

WAXWORKS IN THE ABBEY

I CONFESS some reverence for the waxworks at Westminster Abbey that too often is withheld from them, paying to them the respect due to the burial customs of our ancestors. Their homeliness, too, has pleased me. It is part of the topsy-turviness of things that a show of wax figures of historical personages nowadays has no interest for the young, but makes its appeal solely to the aged. It is always a pleasure to revive the memories of youth, and that we greyheads may enjoy in their company, for in our time these and their like were the simple joys of our growing years. The blasé lad of to-day (a horror to his grandfather, dissimulate he never so well) who is familiar with stage heroes and reared to association with sock and buskin at a time of life when his sedate elders considered an annual visit to the pantomime the limit of permissible enjoyment—*he* affects scorn for mere wax figures.

Were I the guardian and showman of the

Abbey waxworks, I would exclude the impudent young. Such powers of stimulating interest as I might possess I would give to those whom time has sobered. They should see Queen Elizabeth in all her panoply of monstrous fashion. For them alone should King Charles II. stare out of his glass pane, and Nelson with his one good eye gaze into futurity. The Duchess of Richmond should stand with her parrot only before them. Monck, Duke of Albemarle, I say with regret, is to-day too dilapidated even to be shown. But there are those mentioned and various others still fit companionship for the appreciative audiences of the middle-aged and elders whom I would invite to tour with me the Abbey waxworks. The young scoffer outside the portals would not trouble me.

The ignorant alone find incongruity in the association of wax figures and our glorious Abbey, and they are the majority, for the average stroller among the tombs would be puzzled to give a reason why the effigies are here. They are survivals of a custom centuries old. The cherished right of a Roman noble was that of having figures, with waxen masks representing his ancestors, carried at his obsequies and placed in his hall; and from the Romans the observance was handed down. Effigies of English Kings

KING CHARLES II IN WAX EFFIGY
In Abbot Islip's Chapel, Westminster Abbey

were borne before the body at Royal funerals, with pikes reversed carried at the shoulder, and hatchments displayed, and the measured tread of armed men and all the pomp and blaze of heraldry, as can be traced in records far back to the fourteenth century. And where Kings led, the practice was followed by our great nobles. At the interment the effigies were raised high upon a "herse." This was a platform heavily draped with black hangings, and often decorated with arms and sculptured devices, which remained for varying periods in place over the grave, or sometimes by the high altar. Ben Jonson refers to it in his famous epitaph on the Countess of Pembroke—

> "Underneath this sable herse
> Lies the subject of all verse,
> Sidney's sister—Pembroke's mother—
> Death, ere thou hast slain another
> Fair and wise and good as she
> Time shall throw his dart at thee."

The wax effigies, now sent aloft to an upper chamber of Abbot John Islip's Chapel, as if in disgrace and out of joint with the times, once stood about among the tombs on the Abbey floor. Odd they must have looked in such surroundings, with bright costumes and flashing mock jewels when all around was brown and

grey, lacking reverence as to-day we understand it; but they meant no irreverence. Monck's standing figure above his own grave was most fitting, for in this posture he died. His spirit was unconquerable. "Like a Roman general and soldier," wrote an eye-witness of the memorable scene at his passing, "he died standing almost up in his chair, his chamber like a tent open, and all his officers about him." Ben Jonson it is, poet and roystering liver, who in the Abbey is buried upstanding.

The story runs that Jonson begged of King Charles I. a favour. "What is it?" said the King. "Give me eighteen inches of square ground." "Where?" asked the King. "In Westminster Abbey." And there he stands awaiting the Resurrection, in the north aisle of the nave, in the path of square stones, beneath one marked by a small triangular lozenge, in which has been recut the old inscription—

"O rare Ben Johnson!"

Loose sand of Jonson's grave when, in 1849, Sir Robert Wilson was buried close by, "rippled in like a quicksand," and the clerk of works who superintended the operation "saw the two leg-bones of Jonson, fixed bolt upright in the sand, as though the body had been buried in the up-

right position; and the skull came rolling down among the sand, from a position above the leg bones, to the bottom of the newly-made grave. There was still hair upon it, and it was of a red colour." Once again this skull, from which so much living verse had sprung, was seen on the digging of John Hunter's grave, and "it had still traces of red hair upon it."

These wax effigies of Westminster Abbey should be accepted, not as mere show-pieces, but as part of our burial ritual that for centuries was honoured in England. They have seized my errant fancy. Left alone with them in this upper chamber, I have felt on intimate terms with Kings and heroes, a man as good as they—aye, my sense of living tells me, better than they! There is not the separation, as from those who lie below, by all the majesty of Death, and the funeral trappings, carving piled upon carving, richness upon richness, about those whom men term illustrious, by which vain mortals strive in a pitiful effort to conceal that Death is the common leveller—

"The glories of our blood and state
Are shadows, not substantial things;
There is no armour against Fate;
Death lays his icy hand on Kings:

Sceptre and crown
Must tumble down
And in the dust be equal made
With the poor crooked scythe and spade."

That is the message which every dim arcade and chapel in our glorious Abbey gives.

These wax figures are men and women, not heroes really, as like the living presentment as their framers could make them, as they lived, walked and talked; a little stiff no doubt, but not with the stiffness of those recumbent effigies in colder marble and bronze that lie upon the tombs. Was ever there a more kindly figure of King Charles II. than this in wax in the Islip Chapel?—a little bibulous, perhaps; the nose has appeared to me not quite kind, or is it merely the effects of time darkening the soft substance of which it is composed? He holds his arms and disjointed fingers as if suffering internal pain, to which the full eyes seek to give expression, that homely pain which monarchs who have dined not wisely but too well share with lesser folk. No formal sovereignty is limned here; the lined face, the somewhat ridiculous wig, give only the man. I would take Charles II., given the choice, in preference over all the other company of wax.

Queen Elizabeth I do not covet. She lies

gloriously in marble, a Sovereign and a Tudor, recumbent in that great canopied cenotaph which James I. placed in King Henry VII.'s Chapel to her memory, a companion tomb to that in the opposite ambulatory to Mary Queen of Scots: the one woman his mother, the other her executioner, both memorials raised by the same hand. Was ever before a son so placed to fulfil such a task? Elizabeth in wax is posed as the Queen, a stout, matronly figure, over-dressed in a raiment of gorgeous needlework and lace, over-loaded with mock jewels. Wax does not lend itself to the similitude of majesty. And she could be masterful. Listen to her, talking to the stout yeomen gathering in harness at Tilbury: "I know I have but the body of a weak and feeble woman; but I have the heart of a King, and a King of England too!" There is the Tudor ring. This effigy is preposterous, not human.

The orb held in one hand and the sceptre in the other are merely the showman's additions to an unsatisfying figure. Better than this is Nelson, so gaunt and frail, for at least it is unpretentious. The Admiral is dressed in blue coat with a mass of gold lace and curious flat buttons, white kerseymere breeches and silk stockings, and huge cocked hat overshadowing

the pale face, all, save the coat, being clothes that he actually wore—a little, dapper gentleman. Has it struck you how strangely untrue is Nelson, the exemplar of them all, to the type of the British sailor, so hearty, bluff, and weathered?

The image of Elizabeth, oldest of this company, was contemporary, for it has mention in King James I.'s reign, when on King Christianus of Denmark coming to the Abbey it was beautified, amended, and adorned with Royal vestments. Little of the original remains in the present figure, save perhaps the face, which may be from the authentic death mask. Being worn out in the eighteenth century, "with the remnants of an old dirty ruff, and nothing else to cover her"—fie! and for such a Queen!—the figure was remade in 1760 by order of the Chapter, to commemorate the bicentenary of the foundation by Elizabeth of the Collegiate Church of Westminster. The wax effigy of Charles II. used to stand over his now unadorned grave in Henry VII.'s magnificent chapel. Others of Royal lineage are William III. and Mary, a couple much admired in less critical days than these, and buxom, homely Queen Anne.

Catherine Duchess of Buckinghamshire, proud of her Royal descent as a natural daughter of James II., makes a notable wax figure, and one

must believe that it was the subject of her personal care. The dying Duchess, a poor desolate soul, who had outlived her husband and all her children, displayed quite remarkable interest in her own funeral preparations. She sent for Garter King-at-Arms to come to the death-bed, and "feared dying before the pomp should come home." "Why," she asked peevishly, "don't they send the canopy for me to see? Let them send it, though all the tassels are not finished." She made her ladies vow to her that, if she should lie senseless, they would not sit down in her presence before she was dead. What great to-do over so commonplace a thing as a passing!

Artistically, the prettiest of the waxworks is that of her son, the young Duke, who is shown recumbent, as the body was brought from Rome.

The Duchess of Richmond (died 1702) arranged for her waxwork in her will. It was to stand "at the corner of the great east window," to be "as well done in wax as could be," dressed in the robes and coronet that she wore at the Coronation of Queen Anne, and to be "under clear crown glass and none other." A Mr Goldsmith, of London, was the artist. The imperious lady also directed in her testament that her favourite parrot should accompany the figure, as it is shown. These and Lord Chatham in

scarlet robes, and the mere blocks of some other Kings and Queens upon which no ornament remains, complete the company of the "Ragged Regiment," as it has been termed.

These figures at Westminster are mostly the "living effigies" made for the funerals, but not the two of most recent date. Chatham, added in 1779, when the custom of bearing effigies had ceased to be observed, owes his appearance among the wax group to the desire of the Minor Canons and Lay Vicars, who eked out their scanty incomes by the fees paid by visitors, to make the show more attractive. The great statesman proved such a draw that the charge for admission was raised from threepence to sixpence. Dean Stanley, to whose *Memorials* I am a debtor, quotes the laudatory notice of a guide book of the year 1783. "Lately introduced (it says) at a considerable expense. The eagerness of connoisseurs and artists to see this figure, and the satisfaction it affords, justly places it among the first of the kind ever seen in this or any other country."

Nelson's introduction is still more remarkable, for, unlike the first Pitt, he does not lie in the Abbey. St Paul's holds the bones of that incomparable sailor, and to Wren's Cathedral his coffin was borne through the streets of London

on a great funeral car, which afterwards was deposited there. Sightseers flocked in thousansd to see it, deserting Westminster, to the monetary loss of the officials of the Abbey. They met the competition by setting up this wax figure of the naval hero. It is said to have been the speculation of the vergers, whose enterprise was justified by results, for the crowds returned. The show was not seemly, but, after all, the vergers might have retorted that they did only as their predecessors had done, for in mediæval London there was competition not less lively in the rival attractions of the sacred relics of St Paul's and Westminster.

XV

A LOST INVENTION

THIS is a mere trifle of flotsam picked up on the broad ocean of our history. The incident, dismissed lightly as of no importance, very likely was forgotten in the lives of those whom it concerned, who are long since dead: the world knew nothing of it, and it was likely to have remained unknown but for the fact that the papers chanced to be preserved among the muniments at Montagu House, the great London mansion of the Dukes of Buccleuch. There was a secret well kept, and now lost for ever. The brief story will introduce men whom the world counted great, not in their greatness, but in moments when they were mean and petty: King Charles II., back from exile a few years, enjoying his popularity with his subjects and the exercise of regal power so long denied to him, but craftily suspicious, uncertain whom to trust; Henry Benet Lord Arlington, his Secretary of State; Sir Samuel Morland—the last filling a lesser space in the eyes of his

contemporaries, but the second, if not actually the first, inventive mind of his day.

The Great Fire of London broke out at two o'clock on the morning of Sunday, the 2nd September 1666, blazing up in the darkness amidst dry timber-built houses at Pudding Lane, by London Bridge. A high wind drove the flames forward, and sweeping along the riverside they had reached Dowgate by nightfall. In Cloak Lane, which still you may find off Dowgate Hill, was the General Post Office for the mails. Sir Philip Frowde was at the time manager for the lessee, Katharine Countess of Chesterfield, who formed the posts under a monopoly which gave the profits to the King's brother, the Duke of York, and his heirs. Frowde and his lady anxiously watched the Fire bearing towards them, and at midnight, when the peril had become grave, they fled for safety. The acting postmaster, James Hickes, was no stranger to horrors. At hazard of life he had remained in London throughout the previous year's Great Plague, keeping the letter office open and attending to its business, when neighbours were dying all around, and the red cross and that tragic appeal, "Lord, have mercy on us!" were chalked on many citizens' doors.

He stayed himself this night of the Fire till

one o'clock. Such was then the alarm of his wife and children that they would stay no longer, fearful lest the flames should entirely cut off their escape. With difficulty, and no little danger in the burning streets, Hickes managed to reach an inn bearing the sign of the Golden Lion in Red Cross Street, outside Cripplegate, where he temporarily re-established the post-house. He saved such packets as he could hastily remove, and forwarded to Williamson, Lord Arlington's secretary, the letters of State received by the Chester and Irish mails, with a despairing note, "that he knows not how to dispose of the business." He left behind that the thought of which must have caused him many a twinge of conscience, and many wakeful half-hours in those terrible nights, lighted like noon-day and noisy with the crackling and fall of houses, during which London continued to burn. Sir Philip Frowde, too, knew what it was.

Left behind to the flames if fortuitously they should reach it first, or to the hand of any marauder who might break into the untenanted post-house before the Fire wholly consumed it, was a complete secret apparatus for tampering with, copying, and forging letters in the interests of the State.

This was the device of Samuel Morland, a

man whose extraordinary ingenuity would have brought him immense fortune had he lived in an age when the adoption of the mechanical arts to commercial uses was better rewarded. A calculating machine, the drum capstan for up-winding heavy ships' anchors, the gland and stuffing box of the plunger pump, the speaking trumpet, and practical water-raising contrivances—all were his, the product of his resourceful brain. Like the late Member of Parliament of our own acquaintance who invented the safety lucifer match, and omitted to patent it, he missed his opportunity, but that was his misfortune, to be in advance of his time. He was made, late in life, *Magister Mechanicorum* by the King. The philosopher's reputation and trustworthiness were not untarnished, for he had sought to serve two masters. Pepys has drawn him as a lonely figure in a great company assembled on the Fleet to await Charles's embarkation for England: "Mr Morland, now Sir Samuel, was here on board, but I do not find that my Lord[1] or anybody did give him any respect, he being looked upon by him and all men as a knave." He had, with Isaac Dorislaus the younger, during Cromwell's government been one of the Board

[1] Edward Montague, Earl of Sandwich. In Pepys's *Diary*, as his chief, he is always styled "My Lord."

of Examiners of the Post Office, by whom any suspicious letters directed abroad were opened and read. Also, he had kept up secret communications with Charles in France. Cromwell, served by many others whose infidelity was yet blacker than the inventor's, of course knew nothing of this.

Morland had been Secretary Thurloe's own secretary. A dramatic incident in his career of duplicity, as told by Welwood in his *Memoirs*, reads much like an excerpt from the *Arabian Nights*, and little like the truth. This was his eavesdropping at the plot (so called by Royalists) to induce Charles II. and his brother to effect a landing on the Sussex coast, under pretence of meeting many adherents, and to put them both to death the moment they disembarked. Cromwell, Thurloe, and Sir Richard Willis met to scheme at Thurloe's office, and the conversation was overheard by Morland, who pretended to be asleep at his desk. On discovering Morland's presence there Cromwell drew his poignard, and would have killed him on the spot but for Thurloe's solemn assurance that his secretary had sat up two nights in succession, and was certainly fast asleep. Morland is said to have betrayed Willis, the originator of the plot. His reward was one of the first knight-

hoods bestowed by Charles at his Restoration. Pepys, I have said, held him to be "a knave"; later, they had a chance meeting at the Privy Seal office, whence Morland had come with two baronets' grants given to him by the King to make money out of, "all which," says the worldly-minded diarist, "do make me begin to think he is not so much of a fool as I took him to be."

But I am losing the story in recalling the actors. The Stuart letter-writer knew nothing of envelopes. The written letter was penned upon one side of a large sheet of paper, then the sheet was folded, addressed on the back, and sealed with wax or wafer—a good method, for the convenience of which all who have had the handling of large numbers of old documents are profoundly grateful. It had, of course, the disadvantage that with a little expert manipulation of seal and wafer the contents were soon at the disposal of prying eyes. The Spaniards, masters of intrigue, had a way of so sealing up letters that it was said to be utterly impossible to open them without discovery being made. Lord Arlington, having heard of Morland's proficiency in tricks of the kind, brought the method to the King's notice. Morland, by way of experiment, and to show his powers, induced Arlington to go alone into a private room, there

write ten or twelve lines, fold and seal the paper in the Spanish manner, and leave the document with the inventor.

A day or two later he waited upon Arlington, and gave him first a copy of what he had so penned and sealed, then put into his hand his own sealed letter. Arlington examined both and opened them with all care imaginable, afterwards confessing that he could not tell which was his own handwriting. "He immediately left me," Morland records, "being not a little surprised, and acquainted the King with what had happened, and showed him all the papers."

Charles's curiosity was aroused, and his love of devious methods led him to desire to know more. The flagrant dishonesty of the thing must be condoned if all be fair in love, war and statecraft. A demonstration was first arranged at the Secretary's office, at an hour when all the clerks and messengers had left for the day. Models of the apparatus were shown and explained, and the whole process was gone through under the King's eyes, "with which his Majesty" —so Morland writes—"was so well pleased that he sent for the Postmaster-General, and ordered him to prepare two rooms at the General Post Office to put these things in real practice, which three months after was done."

The King came down again to witness a second demonstration, when all went well. The circumstances were highly dramatic. A private gentleman's coach drove into Whitehall. Late at night, between ten and eleven o'clock, the King entered it. With him was Lord Arlington, the State Secretary, and one other. Together they rode unnoticed into the City, to the General Post Office. There, in the shuttered and concealed rooms, they witnessed the forgers at work, and stayed nearly three hours—almost till dawn was in the skies—seeing with admiration and very great satisfaction, so the unblushing Morland declares, the various operations, which were :—

1. Opening with great care and expedition all manner of seals, both wafer and wax, and again sealing the letters up so that the most curious eye could not discover that they had been tampered with.

2. Counterfeiting all sorts of seals, giving as sharp impressions as with the original seals, both in wafer and wax.

3. Counterfeiting all manner of writing, so as to make it impossible for any person to know or distinguish his own handwriting.

4. Rapid and exact copying of any writing, even when a whole sheet of paper was closely

written upon both sides, for which little more time than one minute was required, and so proportionately for any number of sheets.

A fine night's work for a King! Morland, I fear a sad scoundrel, no doubt was dead to those feelings common to all normally constituted beings, which make them regard a forger as a loathsome and despicable creature; but it would be interesting could we read Charles's unquiet thoughts as he drove away.

The King was well satisfied. All these black arts were thereafter, by Royal command, practised at the General Post Office, "with great advantage to the Crown," until by the Postmaster's negligence, when he fled before the advancing Fire during the night of the 2nd September 1666, the machines and utensils employed were left behind and destroyed by the flames.

Years passed by. Morland, grown old and always needy—large monies he had received, but they slipped through his fingers—desired, for his own profit, that the tampering and forgery should be restored, and he set out in a petition to Lord Shaftesbury, then Secretary of State, the great advantages that would accrue to the King thereby; that he would, by frequent inspection of letters when the practice was un-

suspected, come to know the temper of all his principal and active subjects throughout his dominions; that where treason was suspected, it would be easy to make a disaffected subject and his accomplices correspond by copies only, and to keep the originals till their designs were ripe for discovery and conviction. "And this person," says Morland, the tempter, "may sometimes happen to be a favourite, or a Privy Councillor, or a great military officer, and nearly concern the Prince's life and government." Furthermore, the devices of Ambassadors and Foreign Ministers would be thwarted. Those people were always careful to send their despatches of consequence as late as possible to the General Post Office, so that no time was available for spying into their contents. But by the wonderful process exact copies, even of ten or twelve written sheets, could be made in as many minutes.

Machiavelli himself gave no more Satanic counsel to his Prince. But the old order had changed, swept away in a night—the night during which Charles had lain such an unconscionable time in dying. One recalls that tremendous indictment that John Evelyn wrote in his *Diary*: "I can never forget the inexpressible luxury and profaneness, gaming, and

all dissoluteness, and as it were total forgetfulness of God (it being Sunday evening) which this day se'nnight I was witness of, the King sitting and toying with his concubines, Portsmouth, Cleveland, and Mazarin, etc., a French boy singing love-songs, in that glorious gallery, whilst about twenty of the great courtiers and other dissolute persons were at basset round a large table, a bank of at least £2000 in gold before them; upon which two gentlemen who were with me made reflections with astonishment. Six days after was all in the dust."

A cautious and stolid Dutchman, William of Orange, sat on the British throne. He refused his consent. There is a note at the end of Morland's petition in Shaftesbury's hand: "The King made a very honourable answer, that Sir Sam should be considered, but he thought that the secret ought to die with him, as too dangerous to be encouraged." And so far as I know, and so far as is known at St Martin's-le-Grand, the secret died with him, and no doubt it is well.

XVI

LETTERS FROM LONDON DURING THE GREAT PLAGUE

JOHN ALLIN, minister of the Gospel and student of medicine, wrote these letters in 1665, when London was sick and dying of the Great Plague. Fires, like funeral pyres, were kept burning in the streets, adding a foul smoke to so much other foulness. The streets were mostly empty, for few people ventured into them, and then furtively, suspicious of every passer-by. Once the citizen was out of doors on some needful errand, his fears were made plain by his progress, corkscrew fashion, as he crossed and recrossed the road times out of number. This to avoid even a meeting on the same side with some other person approaching.

Human beings are by nature neighbourly. The isolation among them born of this awful visitation; the dread of contact with one's own kind, as with a leper; the hideous selfishness of the time, self centred wholly on maintaining one's own existence—these were as horrible as

were the ghastlier tokens of death striking down men a thousand daily.

London was a city of prisons, the locked and guarded dwellings of citizens into which Plague had entered. A watcher stood before each door, ready to fetch the bare necessities for sustaining life for the stricken prisoners within, but never loosening the bolts. He took his instructions from a safe distance—from a casement window thrown open above. On door after door was marked with chalk a red cross, and the plaintive words, "Lord, have mercy upon us!"

There were doors in these spectre-haunted streets which never opened till the dead cart came on its round, and the bodies—those of a whole family—were brought out and unceremoniously added to the heap already collected; then the cart trundled away for the pit. There was no time for ceremony, nor, with death so common an occurrence, the mood for it. Over the city was a strange, uncanny silence, broken only by the dirge of the church bells.

Traffic had disappeared from the streets, and by withdrawing accentuated the city's apparent emptiness—a big city even in 1665, with all its activities suddenly stopped. Shops were closed. A goodly part of the population had fled. There was not even conversation, the pleasant sound of

human voices. London had become a tomb of the living and the dead. Its one great artery of communication and of commerce, the River Thames, had the same oppressive quietness as prevailed among the buildings, the boatmen having moved upstream, taking wives and children with them away from the infection.

Londoners heard with a distinctness that was arresting the rush of the rapids between the starlings and piers of Old London Bridge.

John Allin had mentioned in his letters—they deal with many topics—that severe winter frost, starting about Christmas, 1664, had continued almost without a break till April. Then on the 27th April he gives casually in a sentence, as if of little importance, the first indication of all that was to follow: "I heard yesterday there are 2 houses shut up in Drury Lane for the sickness."

He wrote much; the packets number in all one hundred and ninety letters, extending over ten years. Something impelled him to write, and frequently, when the Plague was raging at its worst, probably a longing for human intercourse and sympathy, even though he knew—people are brutally frank at such times—that his letters were received with dread, lest contagion should be carried on the written sheet.

"Surely if my friends be afrayd of my letters I would not be afrayd of theirs," he writes in one, half reproachfully, out of his solitude.

John Allin was a parson, ministering at the quaint old Cinque Port town of Rye, till in 1662 the Conformity Act put the problem of conscience nakedly before him. Could he serve God and do what man required of him? He decided that he could not, and his name has honourable place on the roll of those many hundreds of devout and brave Churchmen who went out into the wilderness at the Great Ejectment. His journeyings brought him to London, and there he took up the study of medicine. He addressed his letters, which are still preserved, to two friends he had left behind at Rye, Philip Fryth, a solicitor, and Samuel Jeake, the historian of the Cinque Ports; and they reveal a somewhat surprising personality—surprising, that is, to us at this day, though no doubt common enough two and a half centuries ago. For John Allin, priest of the Anglican Church, a man of education, probably trained at college—a lettered man—held strange beliefs. At night he looked out upon the stars, intent on divining from them the decisions of Fate; he dabbled in alchemy, with something of the unbeaten faith of the old searchers after the secret of the transmutation

of metals; and his astrology and alchemy mixed together in a curious potage with those medical studies by which he hoped to give benefit to suffering humanity.

He writes no connected narrative of the Plague. In certain letters, especially when the infection came nearest to his home, the absorbing topic occupied all his attention, but at times the mention is most casual, merely the number of deaths in London for the week recorded in the published bills of mortality. The reader often is annoyed at omissions of what might have been told; but there is enough, remembering that these are original letters by a man who lived through the Plague. The world knows that time of horror only from Defoe's *Journal of the Plague Year*, a work that owes its apparent authenticity to the author's art alone, assisted by copious quotations from printed and manuscript records at his hand. Much unprofitable ingenuity has been spent in seeking to establish that "H.F.," the reputed writer of the *Journal*, was Defoe's uncle, Henry Foe. The book was given to the world as fiction. Allin is worth attention as fact.

"*May* 26.—Ye sicknesse is said to encrease in Holland, as it also doth here; ye bill mentioned 3 last weeke and 14 this weeke, but its rather

beleived to bee treble the number. At ye upper end of the towne persons high and low are very fearfull of it, and many removed; one house, if not two, are lately shut in Chancery Lane, and one about Cripplegate."

"*June* 26.—I heare ye generall bill this week wilbee about 2500. I thank God I goe about my buisnes without any slavish feare of it; yet my body too apt for such a disease, which proves very mortal where it comes; many whole familyes of 7, 8, 9, 10, 18 in family totally swept away. I thinke there is no fleeing from God's hand, and truely this sicknes so highly pestilential in some places speakes it to be more a judgment than anything else, and true repentance is the best antidote, and pardon of sin the best cordiall."

July gave fearful indication of the terrors of Plague, the deaths attributed to it that month having numbered 4119, but there was to be a startling leap up from these figures. On the 11th August Allin writes to Fryth, who evidently had suggested his flight from London—

"I shall not thinke myselfe safer there [at Rye] than here, whilest my call is to stay here; yet I am troubled at the approach of the sicknesse neerer every weeke, and at a new burying place which they have made neere us, and with some

piece of indiscretion used in not shutting up, but rather makeing great funeralls for such as dye of the distemper; which yet I thinke God will not putt an end to till sin be left and suppressed more than it is: but God seems to pursue a designe which doubtlesse Hee will efect before Hee hath done 4030 in all; 2817 Plague."

"*August* 18.—5319 this weekes bill in generall. Mr Symond Porter, Mr Millers brother-in-law, dyed last Tuesday: I am afrayd to write to Mr Miller of it, lest he should bee afrayd of my letter; but pray let him know of his brother's death."

"*Aug.* 24.—I am, through mercy, yet well in middest of death, and that, too, approaching neerer and neerer: not many doores off, and the pitt open dayly within view of my chamber window. The Lord fitt mee and all of us for our last end! Here are many who weare amulets made of the poison of the toad, which if there be no infection workes nothing, but upon any infection invadeing from time to time, raise a blister, which a plaister heales, and so they are well: perhaps I may by ye next get the true preparation of it, and sent it to you. . . . I saw this day some *prima materia* in our streets."

Let us not, presuming on the fuller knowledge that now is common property, call the honest

man "quack." The ex-Vicar of Rye, a scoffer, as above made plain, at simple folk who placed their faith in the toad amulet, was himself an earnest seeker after the true elixir that should conquer the Plague. On the essential merit of cleanliness, sanitation, fresh air, purity in food and water, he, in common with medical men of his age, had no enlightenment. His mind confused with alchemy and astrology, he believed the cure would be found in an extract from the little plant growth best known as *Cœlifolium*. It fell from heaven in the night was once the popular belief. The plant, which is indicated so often in these letters by the general term "*Materia prima*," was the *Tremella Nostock* (Linn.). It appears in summer after rain on sandy and parched soils, is agitated with a tremulous motion when fresh, and is so frail that gatherers must be out before sunrise; once heated by the sun's rays it dries and shrivels up, and nothing remains except some membranes brownish in colour. Distilled, the plant yields a dark, fœtid oil, believed by the alchemists to contain the universal spirit, which, when extracted pure, would be the solvent of gold so long sought after.

Allin employed a man to gather the plant for him, and moreover pestered his correspondents

for supplies. In the true spirit of the scientific enquirer he asks also for "the moss that grows on dead men's sculls and bones," instancing a certain churchyard at Winchilsea where it might be found. That churchyard can have been kept with little reverence.

He resumes the story of a stricken London in his weekly letters of the 29th August. Meantime much had happened. The troops had been moved into Hyde Park. The Court of Charles II. had gone first to Hampton Court, and thence to Salisbury, but on the appearance of Plague in that cathedral city fled precipitately to Oxford, whither the Michaelmas law term was ordered to be taken, and a Royal Proclamation was issued directing Parliament to meet there.

"*Aug.* 29.—Ye sicknes here is very much increased: this weeke I feare ye bill wilbee neere double the former; and truely I know not how to thinke it should lessen, when as the greatest thing done to stop it, vizt. takeing ye phanatickes out of their owne houses, and sometimes caught meeting and carrying them to infected prisons, of which we have none free, wilbee found in the end to heighten it, though its said one major of ye soldjers hath threatned by that meanes quickly to drive that plague away:—remember that there wilbee little *prima materia* found after

a rainy, but most in a dry night after a rainy day or weather, the wind south-west."

That month of August 20,046 persons had died in London.

"*Sept.* 2.—Ye sicknesse encreased very much last bill, vizt. 1928 increase; ye total 7496; of ye Plague 6102. Since that bill I have not particularly heard anything whither still increasing or not, but feare, by the dolefull and almost universall and continuall ringing and tolling of bells it doth increase. I am sure it approacheth to mee, I meane my concernment: for it hath pleased God to take from mee the best friend I have in ye world, and one wherein my children [he had three] stood as much concerned as in myself with reference to what they should have expected from the relations of my wife: it is my brother, Peter Smith, who was abroad on Lord's day last, in the morning; towards evening a little ill, then tooke somethinge to sweate, which that night brought forth a stiffness under his eare, where he had a swelling that could not be brought to rise and breake, but choacked him; he dyed Thursday night last. I blesse God I am well, was not with my brother after we see what it would bee, as little else upon every distemper here can be expected: it is a greate mercy now counted to dye of another disease."

"*Sept.* 7 (to Fryth).—The increasing sickeness hath now drawne very nigh mee, and God knoweth whither I may write ony more or no; it is at the next doore on both hands of mee, and under the same roofe; but I have no place of retireing, neither in the city nor country; none in heaven nor earth to go unto but God onely; the Lord lodge mee in the bosom of his love, and then I shall be safe whatever betides. . . . If I live I hope to have some *materia prima* from you; if you could inclose a little dust in a letter I shall be glad to receive it (figures this week 8252, of Plague 6978). It is truely still increasing. These 3 dayes hath bene sea cole fyres made in the streetes about every 12th doore, but that will not do ye worke of stopping God's hand; nothing but repentance will do that, of which no signe yett, but oppressions, and yett increasing."

With increasing heat and continued drought, the Plague grew in virulence in the first weeks of September, and the deaths scaled ever higher. Not a cloud drifted across the blue sky, and the sun scorched down upon the fever-stricken city. Rain fell at last on the 15th of the month, putting out the fires in the streets and bringing new life to the parched grass that had grown up unchecked between the stones. The temperature

fell, and the bills began to show a decline, but September, by reason of the vast mortality with which it was ushered in, has the worst record of the Plague year. Allin at this time tells the facts of a medical investigation and its frightful sequel—

"*Sept.* 14.—This sicknes, though more dye, because more are infected, yet, thankes bee to God is not so mortall as at the first, for more recover of it now than formerly. If we knew how to trust the bills it is decreased in the generall. The generall bill is 7690 buryed this weeke, whereof of the Plague 6544. . . . Our friend Dr Starkey is dead of this visitation, with about 6 more of them chymicall practitioners, who in an insulting way over other Galenists, and in a sorte over this visitation sickness, which is more a judgment than a disease, because they could not resist it by their Galenical medicines, which they were too confident that their chymical medicines could doe, they would give money for the most infected body they could heare of to dissect, which they had, and opened to search the seate of this disease, etc.; upon ye opening whereof a stinch ascended from the body, and infected them every one, and it is said they are all dead since, the most of them distractedly madd, whereof G. Starkey is one. I heare also

that above 7 score doctors, apothecarys and surgeons are dead of this distemper in and about ye City since this visitation. God is resolved to staine the pride of all glory; there is no boasting before Him, and much lesse against Him."

Again a week later he writes to Jeake—

"*Sept.* 20.—It is somewhat refreshing to mee to thinke you are yet willing to receive a line from mee. It was an afliction to mee that I knew not to whom I might send a letter with acceptance (except Mr Fryth onely). I am afrayd that some of my friends there are this day too much afrayd where no feare need to bee, for were my penn infectious my hand would soone let it drop. Gracious Mr Cobb (one whom God sometimes imployed in the worke of comforteing and supporting others in this darke and gloomy day of the Lorde) who yet fell by this sickness, and last Lord's Day entered into his father's bosomme. . . . Clouds are gathering thicker and thicker, and I thinke veryly the day of the Lorde will yet prove more blacker. Whither the Lord will make good that word spoken by a child here concerning the increase of ye Plague, till 18,317 dye in a weeke (which all endeavours are used to conceale) though still goeth on in reality to increase it: and that word too of a yeares time of greate and sad

persecution, spoken by ye same mouth after death had once cooled it in this visitation, time will show."

Did ever the brain of Edgar Allan Poe yield anything quite so morbid as the doctor's story just told? Even more gruesome, badly phrased as it is, is this of the child, stricken dead with Plague, yet after death prophesying by word of mouth another year of great and sad persecution before the Plague should be lifted from the city. Distraught minds gave willing belief to the most incredible things. The public desired marvels. A blazing star had appeared in the skies, visible till daylight, a month before the Plague struck London. Mr Secretary Morris's cistern of water turned into blood during a night. Lilly, the popular astrologer, soothsayer and charlatan had an eager audience for his almanacs and writings. Allin's next letter to his friends, after two days' interval, reports the week's deaths in London to have been 8297, of Plague 7165; and on the 27th September he writes—

"I am where ye Lord hath hitherto, amidst 100 dyeing weekely, preserved me, and yet through mercy am in health, the Lord be praysed. The Lord hath decreased this week's bill 1837: there dyeing this weeke but 6460: Plague 5533: and in our parish there was 50 decreased; but

it is still very hot near me: I fear it will increase with you. If you send any *prima materia* in a glasse I pray cover it over with paper, and double seale it that nothing of it bee seene."

The worst was over. In September Plague had claimed in London 26,230 victims so attributed, and probably by far the larger proportion of others whose deaths were accounted for by various causes in the bills of mortality. Safe himself, Allin imparted to Fryth, at Rye, the precautionary measure to which, in part at least, he attributed his own immunity. "Freind (he writes) get a piece of angellgold, if you can of Eliz. coine (that is ye best) which is phylosophicall gold, and keepe it allways in your mouth when you walke out or any sicke persons come to you: you will find strange effects of it for good in freedome of breathing, etc., as I have done; if you lye with it in your mouth without your teeth, as I doe, vizt. in one side betweene your cheke and gumms, and so turning it sometimes on one side, sometimes on ye other."

Thereafter the references to the Plague are shorter—

"*October* 7.—The sickness is now very hot at the next house to us one way, but hath beene neerer, though none of our family hath been ill at all yet, through mercy. What with some

imployment on Lord's dayes, at other dayes sometimes, in this scarcity of ministers (many being dead, though more fled) I am streightened in time. At Yarmouth, Colchester, Ipswich the sicknes is very much, and now pretty much at Norwich; Southampton is reported to bee allmost depopulated."

"*Oct.* 19.—Wee have had this weeke, God be praysed! a very mercifull abatement of ye bill of mortality, vizt. 1849 decreased this weeke; ye whole bill being 3219, whereof Plague 2665, but yet it doth creepe into fresh houses still Ye Lord fitt mee for what his good will and pleasure is."

The long trial had told upon Allin. "My head aketh at ye present," he writes in his first letter of November. Again he repeats the prayer, "Ye Lord fitt mee for what hee intends towards me."

He looked at night into the vault of the heavens to read his fate. The portents boded ill. It is pitiable to realize from the next letter that the man who had lived so long in daily and intimate contact with the facts of life and death, in extreme peril himself, at the end of it all found no peace, but must needs worry his wracked nerves with vain imaginings about the malign influences of the stars. His mind remained simple. Allin clearly was a fatalist, but with faith undiminished

—the faith he held while thousands were dying around him, and weary months passed in his unfruitful researches, in the efficacy of the little plant if only its secret should be vouchsafed to him.

"*November* 8.—Through mercy I am yet very well, though never without dayly feares, and truly not without cause, if I either consider the will of myne own hearte, or yet if there be any truth in ye language of the starrs, for Mars is comeing to my ascendant in my nativity, which was there lord of the eighth; and in my revolution this yeare Lord of the Asc; and in his course of progress and regradation he will continue within the compasse of my ascendant in my nativity till 1st July next. . . . Send as much *prima materia* as you can get gathered in Scorpio, by itself; if in Virgo, by itself."

"*Nov.* 14 (to Jeake).—It is yet dyeing time with us, though the bill is hoped to have decreased this weeke."

"*Nov.* 16 (to Fryth).—You will see a little decrease in this bill, but truly God seemes now in divers familys to visit the 2nd time, after they have beene all well 6 or 8 weekes; and fresh houses in divers places, besides whole familys, swept away that have returned to ye City allready."

"*December* 7.—Some fresh houses in divers parishes are still visited, besides more of them that come to towne, or are imployed in the aireing of other's houses."

"*Dec.* 12.—Divers persons and familyes at their returne home to the City have mett with what they fled from, in so much that I feare and heare this weekes bill hath an increase. I heare there is a new blazing starr seene last weeke, 4 or 5 nights together, about north-east."

"*Dec.* 14.—Ye sicknes is now agayne increasing, as by ye totalls doth appeare, but yet is increased in the sicknes 33, and wholly in the City; divers fresh houses, since the returne of fresh persons hither, visited and swept."

"*Dec.* 26.—The totall of the generall bill this year is, of all diseases 97,306; whereof the Plague 68,596. The sicknesse, wee feare, is still increasing this weeke agayne."

Next year the deaths in London from all causes fell to 12,838, as few persons dying in a month as had died in a day when the Great Plague raged. If allowance be made for the many thousands of those who fled from the infection into the country, the toll of the Plague cannot have been less than one person out of every five who remained.

XVII

THE BELLS OF ST CLEMENT'S

OF late years the famous peal of bells of St Clement Danes, in the Strand, has been mute. The note of a single bell you may hear when the hammer from the clock strikes it, proclaiming the hour—that is all. London people are not observant. Thousands hurry by each working day into Fleet Street and beyond, going in and out to business, a Cockney throng streaked with a leaven of visitors from far distant quarters of the globe who have been discharged at Charing Cross terminus, which aptly has been described as one of the gates of the world. Amid the rush of traffic and with the noisy hum of the City all around them, probably few have missed the clang of the bells. Up in the belfry the long ropes dangle, untouched by any hand.

Sorrowfully the Rector told me one day, as we passed out under the dark tower, with its embedded Norman pillars, into the blaze of sunlight flooding the Strand, that he dare not

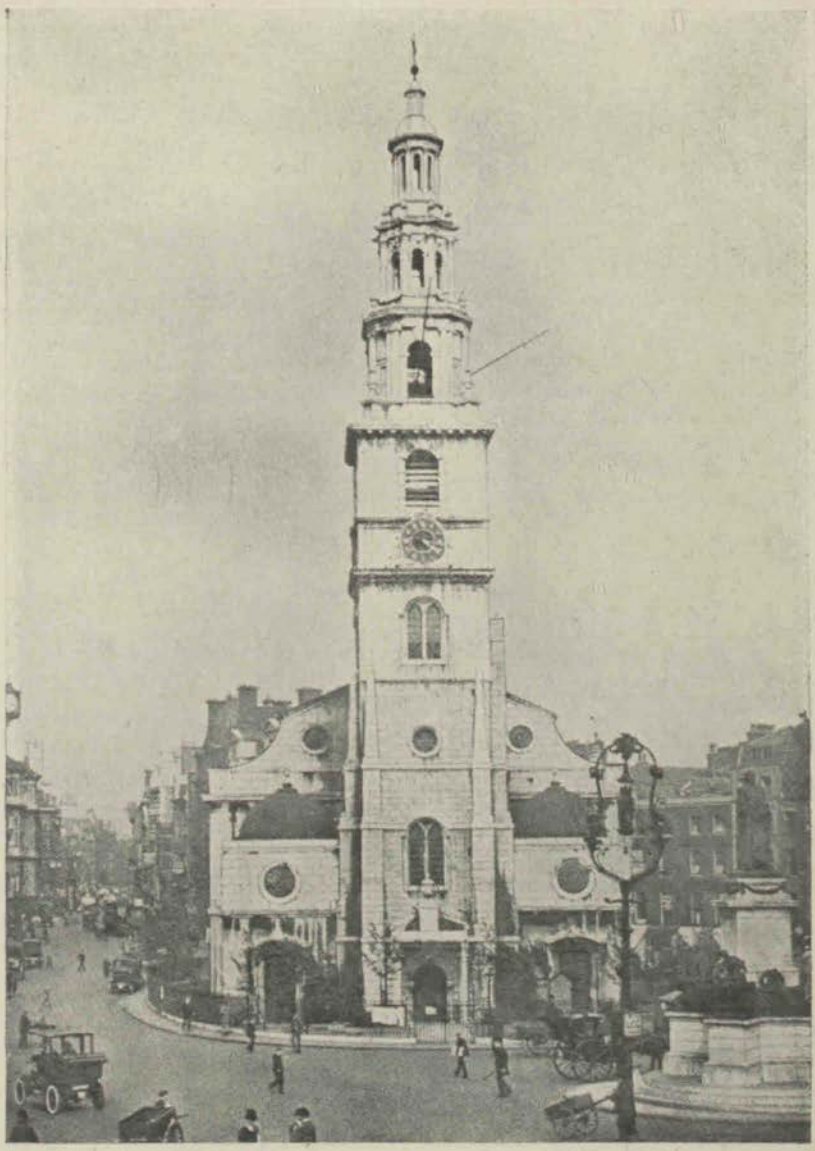
ring the peal for fear of bringing the bells down upon the ringers' heads.

The reason thereof lies within and above. The stout oaken frame which bears the immense weight of all this swinging metal, that has vibrated over the City these many centuries past with so much melody, might seem to an unskilled eye strong enough to resist anything short of the crack of doom. But the plain fact is that the constant swing of the bells has worked the frame loose. Stout as it is, even more strength is needed. Till a sum of about £300 is available for fixing a new steel frame, the belfry must remain silent.

St Clement's bells belong to no single parish, not even to great London. They have rung for untold centuries through the whole realm of nurseryland, whose boundaries only the most distant oceans encompass—

> "'Oranges and lemons,'
> Say the bells of St Clement's"

—who is there alive, with English blood in his veins, who does not remember the rhyme since earliest childhood? And who wrote those lines? Someone has missed immortality by not leaving us his name. No one even knows their date. Loftier verse has been written than these jingles, but what proportion of it will be so enduring?



BELFRY TOWER OF ST. CLEMENT DANES, STRAND

I am prone to suspect that they are Elizabethan, a product of that great age of far greater poetry, which has given us so many rhymes that live in nursery literature. The catch sayings with which our youngest hopefuls seek to entrap their elders, forgetting that they themselves were once children, are for the most part of still earlier date. "How many cows' tails would it take to reach the moon?" "One—if it were long enough!" That is delightfully familiar; but it has been left to learned bibliophiles, greybeards with strained eyes poring through gold-rimmed spectacles over the earliest productions of the English printing press, to discover that this little quip was printed by Wynkyn de Worde, Caxton's old assistant, in his *Demaundes Joyous*, a nursery book issued from the sign of the Sunne in Fleet Street in the year 1510. Four centuries have not blunted its point, and still it is potent to produce shouts of infantile laughter.

"'Lend me five farthings,'
Say the bells of St Martin's.

'When will you pay me?'
Say the bells of Old Bailey.

'When I am rich,'
Say the bells of Shoreditch.

'When will that be?'
Say the bells of Stepney."

St Martin's, the bells of Old Bailey, Shoreditch, Stepney—they are all identified in their proper names and places, and so is "the big bell of Bow," Cheapside, which with its "I'm sure I don't know" closes the animated conversation between the London belfries, and the rhyme goes off distractedly—

"Here comes a candle to light you to bed,
And here comes a chopper to chop off your head!
Chop, chop!"

Let a disturbing doubt—like unto the chopper—be admitted. What have oranges and lemons, most delectable of foreign fruit, to do with St Clement Danes, unless it be to serve the need of a somewhat halting rhyme? The church stands before Temple Bar, at the gateway of the City of London. The association is by no means obvious. St Clement's bells sent their message over Drury Lane, which is within the parish, and the orange girls of Drury Lane have their place in the drama's history. Was not Sweet Nell of Old Drury, most famous of all orange girls, herself a King's favourite? But to pierce the mystery one must go deeper than such superficial explanations. The solution was perhaps found by the late Rev. J. Septimus Pennington, whose long and devoted labours as Rector of St Clement Danes will never be forgotten.

Clement's Inn, now modernized and let out for offices and residences, was a lawyers' inn close by, and there it was the custom at the New Year for the servants to go to all the chambers, presenting gifts of oranges and lemons to the tenants, while from the church belfry there rang a joyous peal. Still, the question remains whether the custom was older than the rhyme, or took birth from it, and as we do not know the date of the latter I cannot undertake to sit in judgment.

Lawyers of note have been there. Justice Shallow, you recall, was of Clement's Inn, boasting—the braggart!—that often he had heard the chimes at midnight.

Another City church has claimed the rhyme as its own. St Clement's Eastcheap stands not far back from the river. Steamboats, trailing long lines of smoke behind them, come up the Thames, passing to the Pool under the raised bascules of Tower Bridge, bringing golden oranges, resplendent with the sunshine of Spain, and lemons from Sicily; and no sight is more familiar at London Bridge than that of the files of men, like loaded ants, carrying the heavy boxes of fruit from ship to shore. But sentiment will continue to associate the nursery lines with St Clement Danes, because—if for no other reason—by its unrivalled position it has become

one of the best known churches in all London. Who will tell off-hand where St Clement Eastcheap, the least notable among Wren's company of churches, even stands ?

Ten bells hang in the now silent belfry, a little lone world to itself poised high within four walls, undisturbed by anything which agitates the great city below. If ever an owl sought a roosting place wherein to blink and preen himself before setting out on nocturnal flights over London, here, I feel sure, he would be found. The tenor bell, big brother of this musical family, weighs 24 cwt. Eight of the company were cast by William and Philip Wightman in 1693, eleven years after Sir Christopher Wren had raised the present church. St Clement Danes, however, is in origin one of the oldest churches in the metropolis, the foundation taking us far back into the mists of antiquity. There was an Anglo-Saxon building at this spot when William the Conqueror and his host landed near Hastings, and the " Danes " in the name preserves memory of the rule of still earlier alien kings.

St Clement Danes has long treasured the possession of its Sanctus Bell, swung high up in the belfry above the chimes. Such a bell is, of course, a direct link with the early faith and days before the Reformation. I feel some contrition

in referring to this matter at all, some regret in performing an unpleasant task, but having assured a society of archæologists that this is an original Sanctus Bell, it is now due from me, with fuller information in possession, to say that it is not. In earlier times the Saint's Bell played a part of no mean importance in the ritual of the Roman Catholic Church. At the point in the service where the words occur,

"Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth,"

the Sanctus was rung, and sent its message over the whole of the parish, that those who were inevitably absent through sickness or upon the bed of death might humbly kneel or bow in supplication with their fellow worshippers within the church.

Many examples of the Sanctus Bell no doubt survived the Reformation, and were hanging in the belfries when the Great Fire of 1666 swept through London, destroying in its path no fewer than eighty-seven of the one hundred and nine City churches. In that tremendous conflagration, the bells, great and small, were melted into shapeless masses of metal, or falling from great heights shattered themselves into fragments. St Clement Danes stood outside the area of the Fire, which stopped in Fleet Street; its bell tower was safe. "Robertus Mot me fecit" is

moulded in the bell-metal in the pretty Gothic letter, with a date. The question turns on the date, the weathered figures of which have been read 1538 and 1558. I climbed over the silent peal, and up an iron ladder to the topmast platform, leaving footprints in the dust of London blown to this height, to get the testimony of my own eyes, and left still undecided. Robert Mot supplies the key. He was a bell-founder in Whitechapel who was not trading in 1538, but was so trading later that century. In the year 1558 Elizabeth came to the English throne,[1] and I have imagined the bell sending out its joyous sound for the first time in a peal rung, after the darkest reign in our history, in welcome of the Protestant Queen.

You may from the wide Strand catch just a glimpse of the bell, high overhead, where through the pierced tower the flag-staffs bear the weight of streaming bunting on days of festival. Each hour is struck upon it by the clock—a simple use. The same note, silvery, clear and penetrating that to-day it gives out must have been heard by

[1] Yet to add other complications, Messrs Mears & Stainbank, the famous bell-founders who carry on to-day in Whitechapel the business originally established by Robert Mot, tell me that from their own examination they find the bell was cast in 1588; and having climbed the tower again I agree with them.

Shakespeare, for it rang in Shakespeare's London; by Milton, when he lived in St Bride's Passage, Fleet Street; by the luckless Lovelace, dying in poor lodgings in Gunpowder Alley; by Dr Johnson, who regularly attended worship at this church, where his pew is marked by a tablet; by all those of the great dead whose ghosts flock through Temple Bar. The clock strikes first on the tenor bell, and then a moment later the note is repeated on Mot's bell. The arrangement is peculiar to St Clement Danes. Perchance the old horologist who made this clock, wily in his day, determined to give himself two chances of accuracy in time-keeping.

A joyful peal from St Clement Danes belfry, standing at the very gate of the City, has made a greeting to every English Sovereign passing through to his Coronation at Westminster or returning to honour the City of London with a visit. With the belfry mute, it seems as though a bit of Old London's long history and tradition had passed out of it. Wind in the high tower sweeps across the bells; their note is as true as ever, but they hang listlessly, no one daring, because of the shaking frame, to give a turn to the wheels which would release all this melody.

Who will help the Rector to give back to London "The Bells of St Clement's"?

XVIII

A LONDON HOUSEHOLD OF A.D. 1337

LONDON has preserved its archives in an unbroken series for a longer period, probably, than any other city in the world, and there is hardly an incident arising in the lives of citizens long centuries back which is not illustrated in one or other of the vast accumulation of documents at Guildhall. I have picked out two or three to tell from them the brief life story of Hugh le Bevere. The tragedy of it interests me less than the light which the parchments throw upon the domestic surroundings of a humble household close upon six hundred years ago.

Hugh le Bevere might have been one of the many skilled craftsmen of London, labouring long hours at his trade while daylight lasted, and bound to his gild and his master. What that trade was—whether sporier, cutler, glover, pelterer—I had small chance of telling, for he figures only as "felon"; but with such exemplary completeness are the City records kept

that I was able to find a will, dated seven years later, of another citizen to whom his tenement passed, and therein Hugh is described as vintner. He was living ten years after King Edward III. had ascended the English throne—the year 1337—in a house that stood in the ward of Candlewyck Street, which now we call Cannon Street, within the City's encircling wall.

Murder was done there. The neighbours, breaking in, found the wife Alice lying stark and dead upon the floor. A knife was flung into the corner, and Hugh—he was childless, and perhaps but recently married—crouched beside the corpse. He would say nothing, nor would he plead when indicted before the Coroner and the Sheriffs, and why that crime was committed and whether Hugh le Bevere was blood-guilty none to this day can tell. The King's justiciars, finding him still obdurate—"he refused the law of England"—committed him to the gaol of Newgate, there in penance to remain until he should be dead.

Penance, as understood in mediæval days, was close and solitary confinement with an unvarying and insufficient ration of bread and water. Horrible enough, I grant, but it lacks the revolting torture of the press-yard, introduced in a later and what should have been a

more refined age, when in that same gaol of Newgate the practice was to place heavy weights upon the body and press to death felons who sought to defeat the course of the law by refusing to plead. I have myself tramped over the press-yard at the demolition of Dance's prison, then still bearing its horrid name.

This crime of murder was committed on the last days of October, 1337, and two months later, on the 27th December, Hugh le Bevere was dead. Meanwhile the Sheriffs had seized his possessions and these they sold, first drawing up an inventory, which sets out with the order of a housekeeper's book the domestic arrangements of this fourteenth-century household. The vintner made good money, for his furniture and clothing were apprised at the value of £12, 18s. 4d., a sum in the then money values far above the competence of any of the poorer workers to amass.

The house consisted of two apartments, one above the other. The lower room, which was kitchen and keeping-room in one, had a part partitioned off for a hall, and this also contained a larder. It had a chimney and a grate. Light came in through the one window, an "oriole" built at the end of the hall—probably a recess with a bay window, the upper part of which

alone was glazed, on account of the great expense of glass, the remainder being closed by a wooden shutter. In the room below the window was the high bench (*summum scamnum*). Before the house was a single step up to the street door, and a porch covering, or penthouse. A door at the back led to the buttery, where stood ranged six casks of wine, the value of each cask being one mark. A tressle table and two chairs, the last valued at fourpence each, were the only furniture, but the kitchen was well supplied with serviceable utensils. There were eight brass pots, not counting one broken, andirons, basins, a washing vessel, a tripod, an iron cooking spit, a frying pan, a plate, and also a small brass plate, a funnel, and two ankers or tubs. Two cellars were excavated beneath the floor, opposite one another, and there was a cesspool with pipes leading to it—let us hope outside the house.

A ladder gave access to the upper room, entered by a space left open in the floor. This was the solar, or sleeping room. Like the rest of the house, it was timber-built, but in compliance with the City's regulations stone walls divided the dwelling from the houses on either side. The room contained a bed, on which was a mattress, and there were three feather beds and two pillows. A great wooden coffer stood

against the wall. In this were stored six blankets and one serge, a torn coverlet with shields of cendale (a kind of thin silk), eight linen sheets and four table-cloths. Alice, the newly-made wife, may justifiably have looked with pride upon her well-stored press.

The clothes, for which there were six chests, were in unexpected plenty. I credit Alice with being a careful housewife, for she had kept, rather than throw it away, an old fur, though "almost consumed by moths," which duly figures in the pathetic little inventory of personal effects. There were two robes of perset, or peach-coloured cloth, another of medley, a third of scarlet, all being furred; a coat, then one coat of ray, or striped cloth, and another with a hood of perset; a surcoat, another of worsted, a third with a hood of ray; and a green hood of cendale, with edging. I do not attempt to distinguish the ownership of this finery, male or female. The London vintner, when he walked abroad among his fellow-citizens or attended his gild feast, depend upon it was as finely dressed, and in colours quite as bright, as was his spouse. The lady's alone were the one camise (a light, loosely fitting dress) and eight savenapes, or aprons.

A candlestick "of lattone," an aumbrey (cabinet, or small portable cupboard) and an

iron herce, or frame for candles, also went to the furnishing of this simple household, and for luxury they had curtains to hang before the door to keep out the cold, cushions, and even a green carpet, while for the husband's use there was a haketone, or suit of quilted leather armour, and an iron head-piece. The personal treasures —gifts, may be, at the marriage, or perhaps inheritances—were a cup, with a foot and cover of silver, value thirty shillings, a mazar cup, and six silver spoons. Hugh had money, too, for he had lent to Paul de Botiller, a neighbour, one mark, as security for which were given in pledge a surcoat and also a woman's coat.

For winter's warmth Hugh le Bevere had stacked a pile of firewood, and this the City sold for three shillings. Coal, borne by the coasting vessels to London, was then much too costly for any but rich men to burn.

I have taken all from the records, with one small license. I do not know which house in the City ward of Candlewyck Street was Hugh le Bevere's. But a house exactly as has been described was built by Simon of Canterbury, the carpenter, a few years before, and he brought his specifications before the Mayor and Aldermen. The house which he undertook to build from the ground entire, down to the locks, was to be paid

for by William de Hanigtone, citizen and pelterer, in cash and in kind; in cash by £9, 5s. 4d., also he was to give half a hundred Eastern martin pelts, fur for a woman's hood of the value of five shillings, and fur likewise for a robe for Simon the carpenter. The pelterers, or skinners, were grouped near about Cannon Street ward, and not unlikely Hugh le Bevere sold his wine largely to men of that trade. Included in the modest sum mentioned for house-building a stable, with solar above, was thrown in.

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